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Spring/Summer 1997

Volume 2, Number 4

\$3.95

Alternative Press REVIEW

YOUR GUIDE BEYOND THE MAINSTREAM

INSIDE:

Excavating the
Instant Ruin

The Bisexual Closet

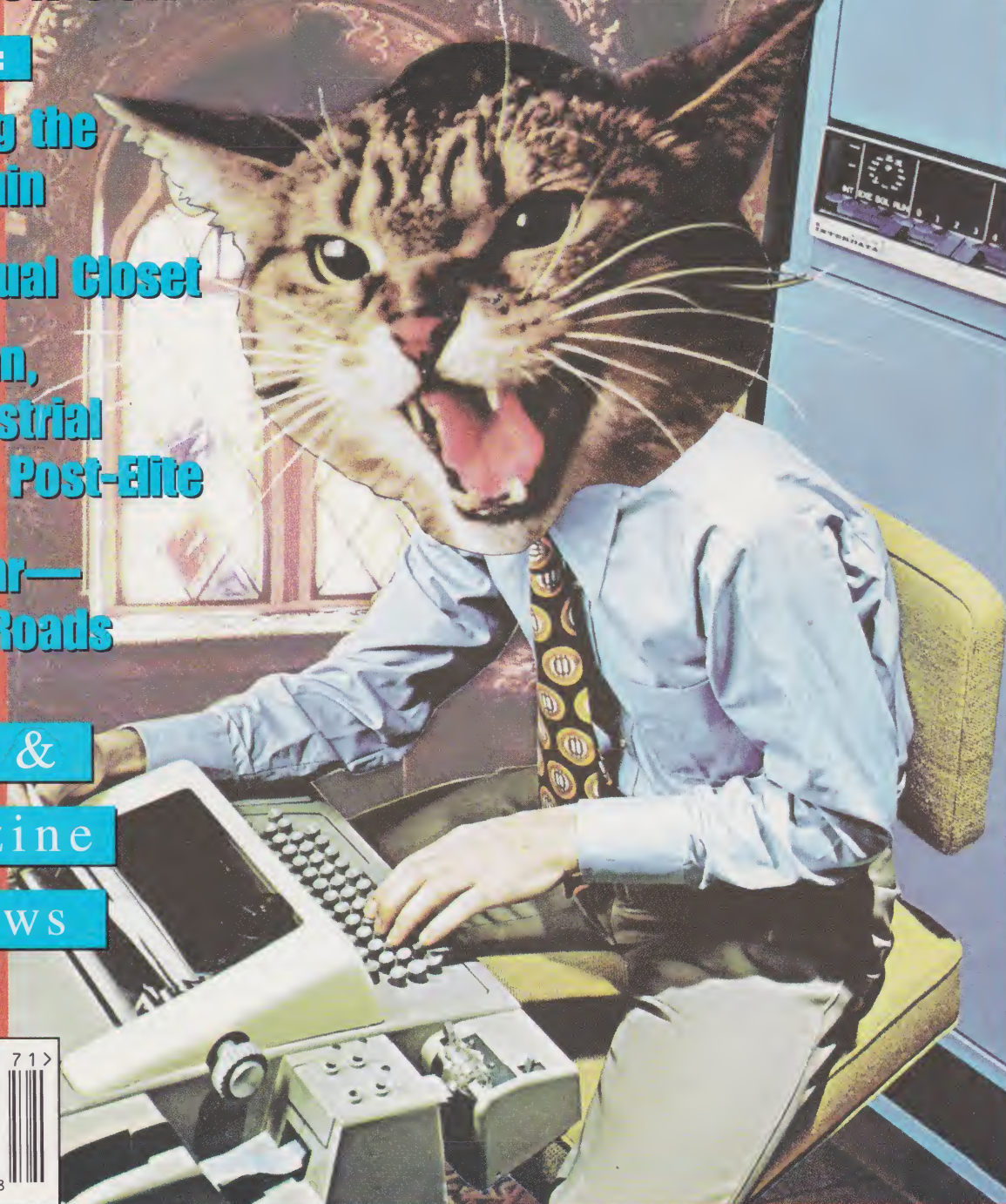
Post-Urban,
Post-Industrial
but never Post-Elite

Kill the Car—
No more Roads

Zine &

Magazine

Reviews



INTRODUCTION

The End of the Welfare State?

W

hile I've never been a direct supporter of the welfare system, it's hard to ignore the meaning of its ongoing process of bipartisan "reform" for those who depend upon

Aid to Families with Dependent Children or food stamps to survive at their current subsidized levels of consumption.

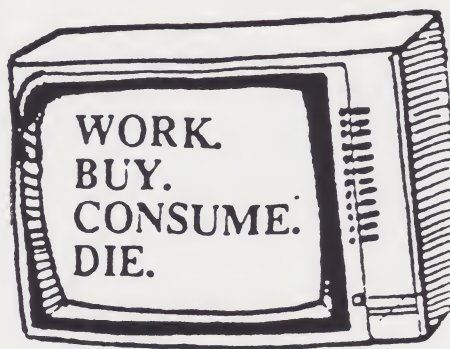
When the money starts slowing down the logical result will be steadily increasing amounts of hunger, disease and desperation, and that's not counting the massive increases in crime, child abuse and despair that will surely follow.

Of course, I'd like to see the welfare system abolished as much as anyone else. But the "end of welfare" in a post-capitalist world would have an entirely different meaning than it does in our current predicament—in the almost complete absence of any genuine community. In a social landscape bereft of any significant practice of mutual aid—or even much lip service paid to any egalitarian ethos—those least able to fend for themselves will be kicked down another level or two on the economic pyramid. In a society consciously constructed and regulated to maintain a permanent pool of unemployed and "underemployed" (in order to keep workers powerless, industrial discipline relatively high, wages down...and wage pressures on inflation minimal) it is inconceivable that plentiful opportunities for everyone to participate in the creation of social wealth would ever be allowed. The writing on the wall is clear. Third World poverty levels will soon become the new scale by which the illusory monetary wealth of North American poor will be measured.

There is something for everyone to dislike in the very idea of creating a permanent bureaucracy of professional aid distributors living in a symbiotic relationship with millions of (mostly) women and children in order to redistribute relatively small amounts of national wealth to those most clearly left out in the cold by capitalism. The image of welfare recipients gleefully partying on generous benefits seems to have an irresistible appeal to many social conservatives, driving them to self-righteous rages of misplaced envy. For racists it is the image (no matter how unreal) of minority women being encouraged to breed irresponsibly that drives them into a fury. For unrestrained capitalists any government support for economic victims is an interference with the "free market" (while corporate subsidy, tax breaks

for the rich, and the elimination of entrepreneurial and investment risk are the proper roles for government according to this perspective). For unthinking, resentful taxpayers, of course, it is the idea that distasteful people are undeservedly living off of the taxes they pay, never mind wherever it is that the vast majority of their taxes go (that's not important to Rush Limbaugh, so it's not important, period).

It's somewhat, though—given the actual function of the mass media—not unexpectedly, remarkable that the actual structural purpose of the welfare system for modern industrial capitalism is never mentioned in public debate over the issue. It's permissible to narrowly frame the debate as a moral issue, or an issue of fiscal responsibility, or an issue of the proper role of



government. And in some circles (for example, on many talk radio stations, and in some conservative publications) it's even permissible to frame the issue in implied terms of racism, white supremacy or eugenics. But in the mainstream media it's never permissible to take a straightforward look at the structural role welfare actually plays in industrial capitalism. Nor is it permitted to take a close look at the present historical reasons why welfare is up for reform or elimination precisely when our political and corporate rulers at last see no credible competition for people's allegiance on their horizon.

A major function of the mainstream media in this society is to distract the public from the most important social, political and economic questions, so that they are never even posed, much less actually discussed. It is up to alternative media to raise these questions. If alternative media don't research and analyze the social, economic and political interests which orchestrate mainstream media debates, their origins will remain mystifying for the vast majority of the population. Ideologically loaded issues like welfare reform, free trade, foreign aid, overpopulation, environmental protection and the war on drugs—to name a very few—can only be thoroughly discussed and analyzed in an alternative media which is relatively free from pervasive, censorious corporate, governmental and institutional influences. By no means are all, or even most, alternative media interested or capable of this level of discussion and analysis. But it definitely won't be found anywhere else.

Jason McQuinn, Editor

ALTERNATIVE PRESS REVIEW

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ALTERNATIVE PRESS

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Volume 2, Number 4
Spring/Summer 1997

ISSN 1072-7299

Press run: 7,000

Printed in USA

PUBLISHED BY

C.A.L. Press

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Columbia, MO. 65205-1446

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The views expressed in the material published in *Alternative Press Review* do not necessarily reflect the views of C.A.L. Press, or those of the editorial & production staff.

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Alternative Press Review is indexed in Access: The Supplementary Index to Periodicals, the *Alternative Press Index* and in the *Book Review Index*.

"The whirligig of time has its revenges."

—B.A.G. Fuller

Alternative Press Notes

Welcome to the world of alternative media! Have you wondered where all the energy, diversity, and creativity goes that's suppressed by the drudgery of work & consumption, the boredom of mainstream culture and the emptiness of daily life? If you haven't yet checked out the multitude of alternative zines, magazines and books now available, start right here! It's still probably true that most people in North America haven't yet ever come across anything like this magazine, or like the other thousands of periodicals and books produced each year from the margins of society. But alternative media are, against all odds, continually working to reach more and more people.

In this issue of *APR* there's a focus on mainstream media critique once again, but there's much more as well. Alfredo Botello takes on the latest media marketing aesthetic, found everywhere from MTV sets to glossy ad campaigns. Kennette Crockett and Monica Warden show how the traditional duality between hetero & homosexuality doesn't fit the reality of a bisexual world. Edward Castleton shows how the newest

urban schemes of business gurus always end up intent on perpetuating ownership and control by the same old elite. And the *Fifth Estate* collective contributes a look at the disastrous effects of 100 years of automobile-powered destruction of our urban lifeways and rural landscapes.

As subscribers will know this issue is very late. I owe a debt of thanks for all of you who have been patiently waiting for this issue to appear. The primary reason it's taken so long to publish this time has been the slow bankruptcy of *Alternative Press Review's* major distributor, Fine Print Distributors, Inc. Without enough money coming in from the sale of past issues, it's been impossible to print for a time. And *APR* isn't by any means the only alternative magazine to be hit hard by the realities of financial instability in the distribution sphere. However, most magazines have hung on, and so has *APR*. Now that Fine Print has officially filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, we're working with them again, hoping they can reorganize and prosper.

—J. McQuinn

Alternative Press Review is an independent not-for-profit quarterly publication of C.A.L. Press.

Subscriptions

Regular Subscriptions are \$16/year by third class mail and \$32/two years.

First class subscriptions are \$22/year and \$44/two years.

International subscriptions are \$24/year by surface mail and \$48/two years.

International airmail subscriptions are \$32/year and \$64/two years

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Sample copies of the current issue or copies of back issues are available for \$5.00 each (\$6.00 each by first class mail).

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Bulk copies of *Alternative Press Review* are available for resale from several wholesale distributors. Contact us for a list of distributors, or information on ordering direct from the publisher.

Submissions

Please enclose an adequate-sized self-addressed, stamped envelope with all articles, photos, and graphic art if you want it returned, or a 29¢ SASE if you want to receive a response. All other unsolicited submissions become the property of C.A.L. Press. We prefer that written submissions be typed and double-spaced; ASCII or Wordperfect format on 3.5" IBM compatible diskettes are encouraged. Please do not send original artwork.

Alternative Press Review may edit submissions for grammar and style, although we always try to keep any editing to an absolute minimum.

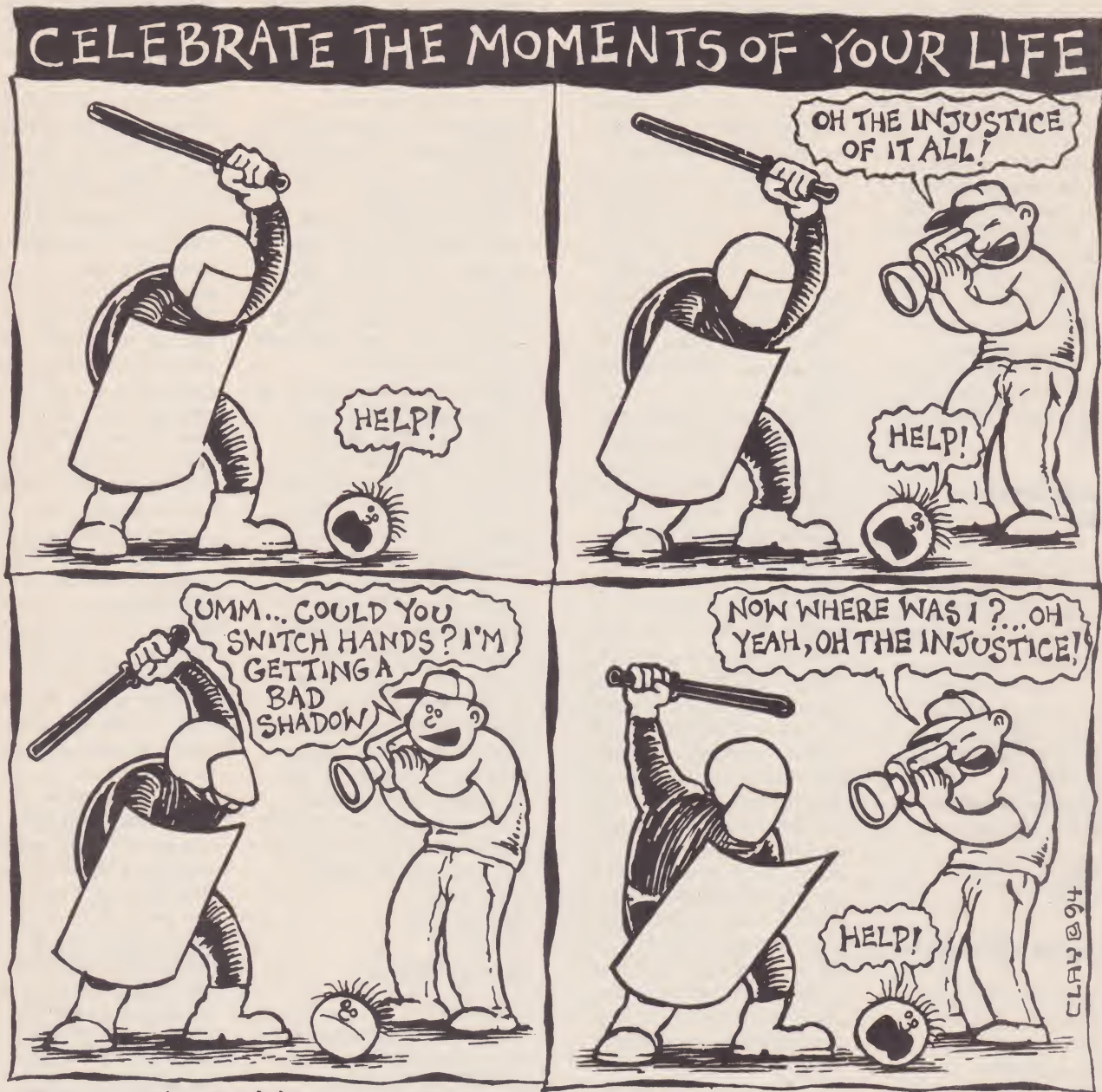
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Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1994 Clay Butler

D.A.R.E. to snitch?

Kansas City's *Pitch Weekly* reports that "Schools nationwide invite the police sponsored Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program into classrooms... D.A.R.E. officers, however, routinely refuse to let anyone examine the curriculum they teach. Their official excuse is that curriculum manuals are copyrighted." *Pitch Weekly* contributor, historian Richard L. Miller, hints that a more significant motivation may be elements of the "curriculum" designed to persuade children to inform on their parents

and family members. Along with "mandatory" curriculum elements like "the D.A.R.E. drug box" (for depositing anonymous reports of drug use), several examples are cited in which kids snitched on their parents at the program's instigation only to suffer unexpected consequences when mothers and/or fathers were arrested, jailed, fired from jobs, forced into bankruptcy or merely had their homes ransacked in police searches for arbitrarily illegal drugs.

Miller continues by quoting a report by Steven Wisotsky published in the *Hasting Law Journal*: "Schools also urge students to report friends who are drug offenders.

'You'd be astonished at how well the students are cooperating,' said an assistant principal at a small town Texas high school. 'Some have even turned in their best friends.'" While a quote from the *New York Times* reveals that "Drug Czar" William Bennett reassured students in Florida that "It isn't snitching or betrayal to tell an adult that a friend or yours is using drugs and needs help...It's an act of true loyalty, of true friendship."

With "friendship" like that who needs the Hitler Youth?

Letters are welcome!

As many letters to *Alternative Press Review*—concerning appropriate topics of potential interest to readers—will be published as is possible given the space limitations of this format. All letters should be no more than one typed, double-spaced page (no longer than 600 words). For anything of greater length, please query first to see if there is any chance we will be able to publish it. Letters will include the writer's name, city and state, province or country, unless otherwise requested. Send all letters to *Alternative Press Review*, c/o C.A.L. Press, POB 1446, Columbia, MO 65205-1446.

Anti-communist Luddite

Dear Sir or Madam,

I'm one of those difficult to define people. An old fashioned (1750) conservative yet also an "environmental wacko." An anti-communist Luddite, I feel I'm defining a niche where many people are. We want more national parks and less military.

I totally love *Alternative Press Review*, and am a subscriber....

John Almada
Sebastian, FL

Don't take advertising

Dear Jason, and others whom it may concern,

In typical zine style I am writing in response, not to an article, but a reader's letter. In the [Vol.2, #2], Eugene Paczelt from Raleigh, NC urges you to accept advertising, and to lower your subscription rate. Don't listen to him! He's lying to you. Please allow me to be the angel on your right shoulder and whisper in your ear a few reasons to do the right thing.

First off, taking advertising will inevitably change your editorial content. Eugene argues that your own personal integrity is the key to keeping a magazine's contents free from commercial pressure but

I just don't buy it. The truth is, because the system is corrupt principled people compromise themselves whenever they join it. Things will change the moment you switch the format of your magazine. In that millisecond *APR* will go from a magazine written for and funded by its readers to a magazine written for a specific demographic group and funded by advertisers. You personally may remain as principled as before—for a while. But you will eventually either have to compromise or leave the magazine.

Eugene also suggests that advertising provides people with information on other goods and services. Advertising does no such thing. Rather than provide us objective information about a product, they attempt to sell us things we don't need. And the cumulative effect of all those ads is to sell the consumer lifestyle—the false belief that buying things equals happiness and personal fulfillment. Advertisers manipulate us into believing we are nothing more than the sum of what we buy and that if we don't like who we are, we can purchase cars, stereos, or designer clothes to become the person we want to be. How sad it is that reading alternative media could be just one more lifestyle we consumers have the option to purchase; that whether it's *Time* and *Newsweek*, or *APR* and *Factsheet Five*, products and the images that advertisers attach to them are used to incorporate into our personal facade.

APR should continue to be a reference for people interested in untangling themselves from this deception and its inevitable dehumanization. Let's keep it a tranquil place, unmolested by the relentless intrusion of monied interests—where the buzz, whorl, and siren of advertisers won't distract from the delivery of challenging and creative contributors' works. Because once you take ads, you will stop taking work that

was created outside the consumption-driven system, things that were created for joy and fulfillment rather than profit or a paycheck. From that point on, your structure and *Newsweek's* are the same. The only difference is, you make a little (OK, a lot) less money from that structure.

In a consumption-based world quality mags that don't jump into your line of vision with the same superficial headlines and skin deep reporting as *Time*, don't always fare well. That *APR* appears on Eugene's local newsstand at all is a blessing. But I'm sure it doesn't fly off the rack like *Spin* or *Sports Illustrated* so who knows if it will be there tomorrow. Besides, *APR*, if people really enjoy your work they shouldn't be writing you with supply and demand ultimatums like, "Why should I get a subscription if I can get it at the same price on the newsstand?" Eugene should just go ahead and pay the damn subscription price as it stands. If he needs to know what's in it for him, tell him it's security. The *APR* will arrive in his mail box month-in month-out. And only his postman will know he reads it.
Jason Jonker
Phoenix, AZ

Horror/humor

J. McQuinn,

...I thoroughly enjoyed last issue, especially "Shopper's Delight" and "Christian Angst" (always).

I like my horror laced with humor.

It helps.
Jennifer Schulaner
Troy, NY

Suggestions for action

Dear J. McQuinn,

I took to heart your disappointment at the response to your call for more feedback and decided to write and say "Hello." I used to subscribe to *Anarchy* and was happy to

move over to *APR* at about the time I decided I'd had enough *Anarchy*—the theoretical aspects of various and sundry political systems, while interesting, weren't helping me achieve a greater realization of my own desires. Not that *Anarchy* wasn't important to me. As a result of reading *Anarchy* I went out and bought Vaneigem's *Revolution of Everyday Life* and really lived with it for about six months. The upshot was that it made me quit my day job! That was about four years ago. I also found my way clear of being attached to the idea of any kind of "success" that would derive from musical endeavors involving a record corporation. DIY from here on out. But my purpose in reading periodicals is to expose me to ideas which I might in turn use to further the satisfaction of my own desires. I'm moving from a theoretical place now to a more practical one.

In the Winter '95 [Vol.1, #4] issue of *APR* there were some stories coming very close to what I'd like to see more of, especially "Defiant Life: The Wild Ranch Manifesto." That was great, but my question, the question I myself am dealing with now that I sort of have my own version of the Wild Ranch happening is: Who does Roger play with? Where are the Rogers among us finding satisfaction in any kind of group? Or is this impossible? I also liked "Larry-Bob's Guide to Selling Out." Some good insights and practical advice. I would have liked a little more how-to instruction in the excellent "Back Off! Stopping Harassers Now" article. I suppose I'll read the book. But the "Sorrow and Cynicism—We Have to Dismantle All This" piece lacked creative suggestions for action.

Specifically, as my "Guide Beyond the Mainstream," I would like to hear more about how other people are finding ways to satisfy their desires alternatively. I would like to read about alternative choice

models which are fulfilling people's livelihood, sexuality, creativity, community and spirituality.

If you do print this letter, I'd like to P.S. with a request for email info on sources pertaining to DIY music distribution—DIY concerts, coffee houses, international busking, touring—and also boycotts, voting with dollars, or any individuals trying to carve out niches of beauty.

Thanks,
John Humphrey
Los Angeles, CA

"In Our Backyard"

Dear Jason,

Finally someone took the interviewer's mic away from David Barsamian [see *APR* Vol.2, #3/Winter '96] and got him talking about the potential impact of work like his in radical radio and other media. For almost two years as a volunteer news reporter and producer of a daily, local news show on WORT, a community radio station in Madison, Wisconsin, I found Barsamian's model very applicable. (Barsamian inspired me personally at *Z Magazine's* first Z Media Institute, a week-long experience in Woods Hole, Mass., I would recommend highly to all you leftist zine editors out there.)

At WORT, from early 1983 to mid-1994, I helped recruit and train activists to record the stories of people "In Our Backyard" (as the show is still known and on the air) ignored by the local newspapers, TV network affiliates and Wisconsin Public Radio. Like Barsamian, few of us had any previous journalism or radio experience. But we learned it all by diving in and producing an alternative news show five nights a week that was consistently provocative if not seamless.

True, an immeasurable amount of energy is expended by many people to keep such a show going day after day, but we designed it to sustain itself. We tried to teach everyone

how to do everything so that a volunteer who walked in off the street could produce the show within weeks. Of course that meant the old-timers had to do the shit work too.

I'm no longer in Madison or involved in the show, but when I do have the opportunity to hear "IOB" it still stands out as the most democratic media in town. That's not to say the

show is always easy to listen to, especially with all the unforeseen technical derailments that can occur during a live and unrehearsed daily program. But I think the show has a generally forgiving audience that knows high ratings and revenue is not the goal. The show is meant to expand the parameters of debate, give voice to the voiceless and

demand social justice.

Barsamian, whose show WORT broadcasts as well, may sound to himself like a lone voice in the wilderness. But he reminds us that together we are a wilderness of voices that people *will* tune in to hear.

Thanks,
Joel Patenaude
Dubuque, IA



Critique: yes; anachronism: no

Dear *Alternative Press Review*:

Regarding Fred Woodworth's article "The Computer: Dr. Frankenstein's Latest Monster or Biggest Ripoff in History?" [see *APR* Vol.2,#3/Winter '96] I have a few points to make. While I find the questioning of technology a laudable enough enterprise (I appreciate John Zerzan's work, for example), I suppose Woodworth's conclusions will come as no surprise to anyone who has seen Bob Black's critique of *The Match!*, where he points out that: "Woodworth's unreasoning attachment to 18th-century rationalism and 19th-century positivism renders him an embarrassment to the cause of science, which has long since emerged from the billiard-ball universe Woodworth inhabits." Some have tried to update anarchism with chaos theory, quantum mechanics, ecology, information science, systems and game theory, and so on; don't look for that from Woodworth.

But then, Woodworth proudly proclaims that he had *stopped thinking* before he *started writing*; some of us happen to find that formulating our thoughts in writing actually stimulates further thinking—Woodworth, on the other hand, already knows all the answers, and so doesn't need to disturb his mental repose with any further thinking, so I guess I must address these objections to his readers, who might not have *stopped thinking* yet, or at least might start up again, as Woodworth loudly boasts that he will not.

1. The first point he makes concerns nothing bad about computers *per se*, but only *bad programming*. My poor sister can't complete her husband's family-tree with the genealogy program she has, because it doesn't allow numbers lower than 100, so Julius Caesar won't fit. The analogous problem Woodworth points to in-

volves a similar lack of planning on the part of the programmer(s), as does the voter-record program he mentions (which should have a help-screen available for a single key-punch explaining the correct format for the search). This provides no argument at all against *well-written* programs. (And never mind that the phone book and the program's data base don't have the same information in them.)

2. The extended bit of scientifiction on digital steering I can only find laughable. Why in hell would digital steering replace the steering wheel with two buttons? Has Woodworth never seen a video game, many of which use such "analog" devices as joysticks and steering wheels? Besides that, doesn't he know that many computer-driven machines already exist, which—mysteriously enough—have no problems because of their "digital instants of turn"? Woodworth doesn't even know about the technology that *already exists*, and claims that it *can't work*.

3. As to the specific example of a card-catalogue versus computerized cataloguing, does he really think that it would take more effort to enter this information into a computer than to type it onto cards (of course just copying it from the cards by typing it in will take work-duh!-but you could use a scanner), and that the computer would offer no advantages, such as the ability to copy the information quickly, to provide a convenient copy on a disk or over the phone, to run searches by geographical area (for example), or to print it out, say, on mailing labels?

4. The argument about the "human scale" must take some sort of prize for illogic. Woodworth expects everyone else to find devices that work on such scales "alienating," like he does—it comes as no surprise that he can only "understand" them by making misleading analogies about

cars and boats. Doesn't he realize that literally everything consists of exactly such small-scale objects (which also aren't objects, in the science which he can't understand) whose "portions are too tiny to be seen, cannot be touched, cannot be observed under any reasonable circumstances"? If I wanted to take an aspirin to relieve the headache his essay has given me (as if I were "smart enough to see the agony in" my own "stupid hell!"), then that just "alienates" me even further because I don't (and *inherently can't*, according to Woodworth) understand molecular biology and neurochemistry, which "is *intrinsically* almost as big a mystery as the [electric] light is for the chimp"—like *everything* in the universe!-and perhaps not coincidentally, everything breaks down to digital on that level).

Critique: yes; questioning: yes; but why should we attend to the frozen thoughts of this anachronism?

Yours truly,
Dan Clore
St. Helens, OR

A winner

Dear Jason McQuinn:

Your new issue arrived a few days ago, and I'm here to tell you it's a winner. I especially like the interviews with Noam Chomsky and Jay Kinney. I've been a subscriber to *Gnosis* for most of its life, and with the current issue I've become a contributor. So I found the insights drawn out in the interview particularly interesting.

I also want to call your attention to my new book, *Ring-ing in the Wildemess: Selections from the NORTH COUNTRY ANVIL*...For me and a lot of others here in the Minnesota/Wisconsin area the *Anvil* was the alternative press for many years, and after it stopped publication in 1989, putting together an anthology of it was a logical step. In making the selections, I kept the

magazine's continuing emphasis on rural radicalism and regionalism in the forefront.

Best wishes for continuing success with *APR*, and may there be more issues like this one.

Rhoda Gilman
St. Paul, MN

Hallucinating spectacles

Letters Page, *APR*,

I have just come across a copy of your Winter 1996 issue; in it your reviewer "MZ" [Mickey Z] writes: *Network News* number 8 "is a 20-page, chapbook-size zine that brings home the point that the zine world is awash in watered-down situ-inspired bullshit. Who knows if all these editors have even heard the name Debord, but the simple reality remains that the spectacle-commodity rhetoric and style has been separated so many degrees from its roots even a late-comer like me sounds like a goddamned authority."

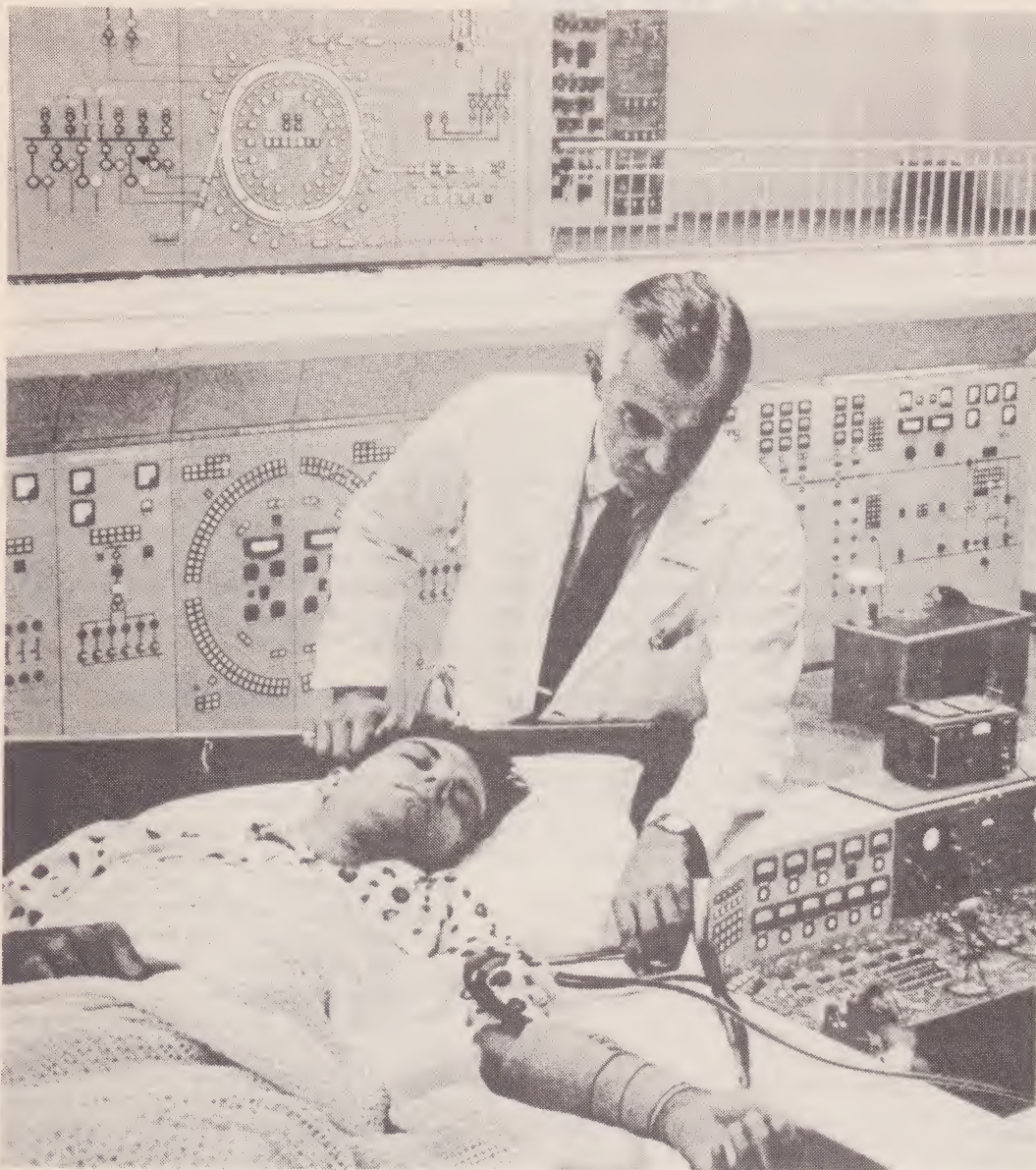
I fear Mickey Z may be such a zealous convert to the Debord faith, that he is hallucinating "spectacles" of his own.

Network News #8 (which I have here enclosed) is in fact a 24-page European A5-size zine. It contains an interview with the composer Nigel Ayers, reviews the kinetic art of Eduard Bersudsky and others, reprints local press cuttings on the "Beast of Bodmin"—the composer Esme Hand, some fanzine reviews and a few whimsical newspaper clippings.

I can find nothing in *Network News* to do with the turgid pontifications of the megalomaniac Guy Debord, or the media academics who worship at his altar.

I understand that Debord's cronies at the Situationist "International" also claimed responsibility for the strikes in Paris in 1968, and Punk Rock—which they had little, if anything, to do with. Now they're the force behind the

LETTERS



Johann Humyn Being

zine world are they?

How about a more objective review next time?

Yours faithfully,

Susan Boyle

Network News

POB 2

Lostwithiel

Cornwall PL22 0YY

U.K.

On examining the issue in question I have to agree that there is not much critical substance to NETWORK NEWS #8, certainly nothing that would indicate it advocates any special adherence to situationist theses—however watered down. The extent to which Mickey Z

sees situationist influences at large in the (more political fringes of the) zine milieu may well mirror the extent to which Greil Marcus imagined the situationists influencing the origins of punk. However, the fact that neither vision is very probable is, I would think, more a criticism of punk and the zine scene than an indication of the late situationist artist/theorist Guy Debord's alleged megalomania!

NETWORK NEWS seems an admirable effort to me. It includes some enjoyable light reading, even a bit of "whimsy," along with some rather reliable zine reviews of its own. But

potential readers please don't get the idea that you'll find radical theory, advocacy of détournement, or any especially coherent social criticism in these pages. Just lighten up and enjoy the reading.

Jason McQuinn

A winner

Dear Colleagues:

We wish to express our concern that a small number of mega-publishers has begun to monopolize the publishing trade by discounting their books to chain bookstores and large department stores such as Sam's and Wal-Mart. This

unfair trade practice forces small independent booksellers and publishers out of the market. The end result of such practices will be de facto censorship, when only a handful of large companies decides who and what will be published.

The Social Responsibilities Round Table Council unanimously passed a resolution on July 6 urging the Federal Trade Commission to vigorously enforce the Robinson-Patman Act requiring publishers to offer the same discounts to all booksellers....

The Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association supports the American Booksellers' Association in its anti-trust suit against these mega-publishers. We call for the restoration of free trade in the publishing industry immediately.

Sincerely,

Action Council

Social Responsibilities Round Table

American Library Association

Act of Rebellion?

Dear Editors:

Recently, it was reported in the news that teen drug use is way up. Though I am always skeptical about the accuracy and authenticity of statistics and pie charts that the liberal media puts out, I feel as if there may be some legitimacy to their claim. The real question the Associated Press and our non-inhaling President should be asking is why?

Maybe it's because kids don't see any possibility of a prosperous economic future for themselves under the increasingly constrictive tax code.

Maybe it's an act of rebellion from young America against the police state forming around them and the cops who do nothing except beat people over the head, write speeding tickets, and hassle kids about curfews.

Maybe these Generation

Continued on page 49

Talk Radio

The Myth of Electronic Populism

Tina Dirmann & Carl Boggs

People are talking about the talk generated by talk...talk radio, that is. There is no doubt about it, America is tuning in to talk radio. Current estimates say that 52% of Americans listen to talk radio at least one hour per week, and 30% of those report listening three or more hours per week. (Fund, Spring, 1995: 59). It's the fastest-growing format around, making up more than 1,000 of America's 10,000 radio stations (Fineman, 2-8-95: 25). Even more revealing, 36% of Americans cite talk radio as their favorite source of political information (Sifry and Cooper, 4-10-95: 482). It has become a major competitor against other media outlets, such as newspapers and TV news (which have subsequently been dubbed "the old media"). Talk show supporters believe this migration away from the old media and toward radio is a positive move. Average citizens have been given a direct line to the media, where they're encouraged to call-in for the sole purpose of telling thousands in the listening audience their point-of-view on current political and social concerns. This interactive nature of talk radio, they argue, allows the audience to speak, to discuss important topics with show hosts and other callers, and to participate in the political dialogue. Radio shows have become electronic neighborhoods on the information superhighway. No longer do citizens need to rely on what has long been labeled an "elitist" media group to set the American agenda. The people, at last, have found a voice.

But have they? Is the talk radio medium capable of acting as America's voice? While this format does have the ability to engage the public in more dialogue, it does not necessarily facilitate more *meaningful* dialogue. For the most part "topics" up for discussion are chosen by hosts, who are at the mercy of a ratings game. In addition, callers are carefully screened before being allowed on the air, given a few brief moments to make their point, and often cut off when deemed "out of control," or, even

worse, considered "boring" by the host.

Talk radio is building a pseudo-public sphere. Individuals who call-in to talk radio programs believe they are active participants in the political debate because they've been put on the air, where potentially thousands in the listening audience will hear what they have to say. Citizens have been told this is their forum, their opportunity to speak out. But in actuality talk radio discussions are limited in range and length. All topics up for discussion have been carefully pre-selected. Anything not glitzy enough to draw a big audience will probably be passed over, regardless of its political value. The result is a multitude of superficial topics,

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But have they? Is the talk radio medium capable of acting as America's voice?

exploring everything from the president's sex life to O.J. Simpson, over more substantial political and social issues. Additionally, conversations are guided by a talk show host who, ever mindful of the need to score high ratings to keep his advertising dollars, is there to shout and insult, if necessary, to keep the ball rolling.

Opening the Political Dialogue

In their book *Creating a New Civilization*, Alvin and Heidi Toffler state, "Today's spectacular advances in communications technology open, for the first time, a mind-boggling array of possibilities for direct citizen participation in political decision-making" (Wright, 1-23-95: 15). Many believe talk radio is the first step toward this kind of real participation in the political decision-making process.

Citizens today feel the ballot box has let them down. Witness the June 6, 1994 edition of *Time* magazine. Among comments in the letters section were: "A problem in our pseudo-democracies is lack of access to those making decisions on our behalf," and "We great unwashed have become cynical and disillusioned about our representative democracy...Until we personally feel we have some real input into the political system, we will remain as cynical as we are." Such statements reflect the general feeling of political malaise that currently permeates the populace. Citizens no longer believe that change is just an election away. As one ineffective politician is replaced by another, voters do not feel in control of government, they feel disempowered by it. "I haven't voted for years," writes another angry individual. "What's the point? Republican, Democrat, or whatever...they're all the same, so nothing ever changes."

At a time when Americans are trying to survive in a sluggish economy, people accuse their "representatives" of being "out of touch" with their needs. Proof seemed to come in 1989 when members of Congress

Radio on the Right

gave themselves a \$45,000 pay increase while the rest of the populace was trying to stretch an average salary of \$27,000 a year, (Sifry, 4-10-95: 482). The public's discontent with government encompasses both sides of the political party coin. In the 1992 presidential election only 37% of Republicans and 43% of Democrats deemed it worth their while to vote (Almanac, 1995: 37). While for the first time in history a third major candidate ran as an Independent, with his biggest appeal stemming from the fact that he had absolutely no experience in government (therefore he was not a "career" politician). He received an unprecedented 19% of the vote. There is a feeling of popular discontent among Americans, who are angry at the politicians, and frustrated with government.

This is where talk radio comes in. The industry has picked up on the sentiments of the average individual (or "Joe Six-Pack" to use a Rush Limbaugh term) and declared itself an ally.

"Somewhere along the line America has gotten suckered into believing that by voting new scoundrels into office, these guys are going to be pure as the driven snow," said syndicated talk radio host Tom Leykis during a show shortly after the November 1994 elections. "Sorry, anyone who believes that things are going to be different is a fool" (Sifry, 4-10-95: 482).

Talk radio has become a validation system for disgruntled citizens. It echoes their beliefs (i.e. that most politicians are uncaring, unresponsive, self-serving bureaucrats) in a way that can't and won't be done in the "old media." This is the defining element of talk radio's appeal. A frustrated citizen no longer, as he once did, goes to his local bar room or barber shop to talk politics. And in the age of multi-media technology, the editorial page will no longer suffice. (After all, the best selling newspaper in the nation is *USA Today*, with a daily circulation of just over 1.5 million (Almanac, 1995: 314). Compare that with the more than 20 million regular listeners Rush Limbaugh draws for every broadcast.) Nor can the average Joe expect Ted Koppel and company to turn their microphones over to him for any length of time. But he can flip on the radio for a few hours of government bashing. And when the talk hits an emotional cord in the listener, he's invited to dial a 1-800 number and let everyone know about it. By the end of the phone call the citizen may still be angry, but at least he "did something" about it. He called in.

Talk radio has become a *major* outlet for discontented Americans. Yet, this function

This is a forum that is at its best when the hosts, guests, and callers are in the middle of an emotional fervor...[An] article in the *New York Times* put it best when it referred to talk radio as "a medium whose oxygen is outrage." Mere "outrage" over an issue, however, is not enough. There must also be a time for reason, and a time for the exchange of ideas. But that kind of dialogue can't take place in a world where any conversation void of insults, demeaning song parodies (a favorite on talk radio), and angry one-liners is viewed as slowing the pace of "the show."

of talk radio does not mean it is facilitating more critical political discourse. This is a forum that is at its best when the hosts, guests, and callers are in the middle of an emotional fervor. That's not to insinuate that emotions are necessarily a bad thing. Indeed, it is often our passions that motivate us towards change. Emotions are the stuff revolutions and mass social movements are made of. But most of the passion behind talk radio seems to be geared toward topics that are completely irrelevant to the political world (like how we feel about Mrs. Clinton's latest hairdo) or is aimed at taking pot shots at anything involving government policy (especially if it involves the chief politician, President Clinton). A January 1, 1995 article in the *New York Times* put it best when it referred to talk radio as "a medium whose oxygen is outrage." Mere "outrage" over an issue, however, is not enough. There must also be a time for

reason, and a time for the exchange of ideas. But that kind of dialogue can't take place in a world where any conversation void of insults, demeaning song parodies (a favorite on talk radio), and angry one-liners is viewed as slowing the pace of "the show." And talk radio listeners like the pace of their shows as fast as they can get it. Leykis said in a recent interview, "I could walk into a station and say, 'I'll bash gays, I'll attack blacks, I'll use as many expletives as I can get away with under FCC guidelines,' and I would be cleared on 600 stations tomorrow, because that's what radio stations are clamoring for right now" (Sifry, 4-10-95: 482). Can that be called an opening of the political dialogue? The goal of this kind of "talk" is to provide emotional gratification, not intellectual gratification.

And it's not likely to change anytime soon. It can't, because radio stations, and their sponsors, do not want it to. But not because talk radio's ultimate purpose is to serve the public. It is to make money. Radio stations are businesses, there to make a profit, not to serve humanity, despite any protestations to the contrary. That means they need commercial sponsorship. And the only way to get that is to have high ratings. The higher the ratings, the more a station can charge for a commercial slot. In the words of Rush Limbaugh, spoken during a speech given in Daytona Beach, "The reason I do what I do, the way I do it, is to get to the largest audience possible and to get the largest dollar amount I can for commercials. It's a business—strictly a business" (McManus, 7-10-95: 25). Talk radio's first priority, then, is to do whatever it takes to draw the biggest audience. As a result, talk shows become more entertainment oriented, more emotionally gratifying, and less concerned about issues of intellectual and social importance.

The Nation magazine writer Micah Sifry interviewed Leykis in April, and noted "he makes no apologies for wanting strong ratings, gearing his show to young listeners in part by filtering out older-sounding callers." The inference being that younger callers are more passionate, and thus will "make better radio."

For the sake of the "show," callers deemed unemotional are screened out. Possibly a talk show host's best friend, the screener is an entire position created to determine if a caller has what it takes to make it on the air. Exactly "what it takes" may be unclear, but it appears to be a mysterious list of criteria used to ensure not only that articulate callers with something to say are put through, but that, perhaps more

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importantly, what they have to say is entertaining enough to keep an audience listening. Journalists of the mainstream media have been criticized as being gatekeepers of information, deciding among themselves what is news, and what will be reported to the public. But talk radio has a gatekeeping system all its own in the form of the screener. Unlike Leykis, most shows (indeed, entire stations) are reluctant to talk about their screening techniques for fear listeners would realize that the microphones aren't as open as they appear.

Additionally, to keep the show flowing, callers are put on and taken off the air in quick succession. So that even callers who make it through the screening process are given only a few on-air moments to make

their point before they are cut off and replaced by another caller. That leaves precious little room for a dialogue to develop. Further, callers struggling to state their position are often interrupted by a host, who usually has a point of his own to make or is trying to wrap things up for the next commercial break. New York talk show host Don Imus said in a *Time* magazine article, "The news isn't sacred to me. It's entertainment. This show is an entertainment device designed to revel in the agony of others" (Corliss, 1-23-95: 22).

But what's important to understand here is that people are accepting this kind of entertainment talk as political dialogue. They are led to believe that the "call-in" portion of talk radio is giving them a way

to, at last, participate in the democratic process. As long as they can call-in with their opinions on "The XYZ Show," they've done their share. Working for a campaign or attending a political rally appears unnecessary. During a recent journalism seminar NBC correspondent Gwen Ifill said, "The new media caters to and is built up by people who used to sit on bar stools and complain to each other. Now they can dial an 800 number and complain for free. We think that means something? I'm not sure it really does" (Fund, Spring, 1995: 52).

What's the Impact?

Any Republican elected in the November 1994 election would probably disagree with

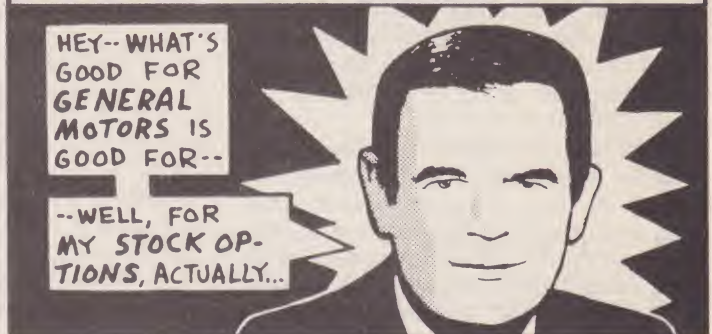
THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

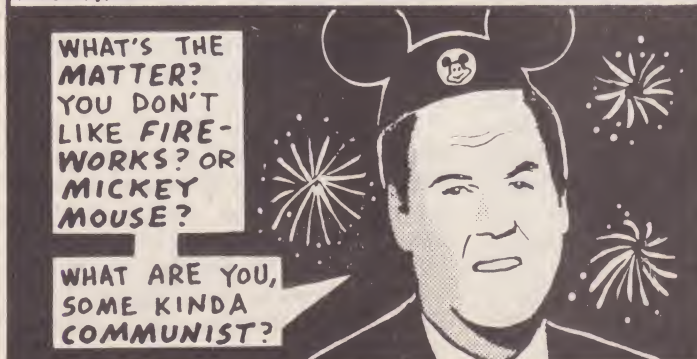
THIS WEEK--A LOOK AT SOME OF AMERICA'S BIGGEST WELFARE BUMS--SUCH AS ED RENS, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF MCDONALDS, WHICH RECEIVED \$466,000 FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IN 1992 TO PROMOTE CHICKEN M'NUGGETS OVERSEAS...



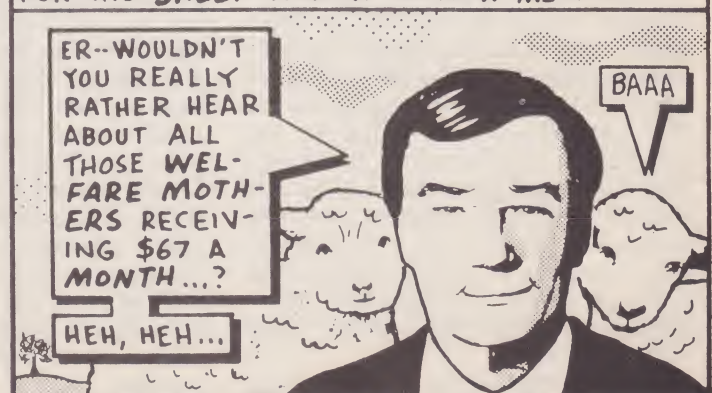
OR JOHN F. SMITH, JR., PRESIDENT AND CEO OF GENERAL MOTORS, A COMPANY WHICH RECEIVED MORE THAN \$110.6 MILLION IN FEDERAL TECHNOLOGY SUBSIDIES AS PART OF A PROGRAM TO CREATE JOBS FROM 1990-1994--DURING WHICH TIME THEY SLASHED 104,000 JOBS...



AND THEN THERE'S MICHAEL EISNER, CEO OF THE DISNEY CO., WHOSE RESEARCH INTO BRIGHTER FIREWORKS IS BEING SUBSIDIZED BY TAXPAYERS TO THE TUNE OF \$300,000 THRU THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY "COOPERATIVE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT" PROGRAM...



FINALLY, WE CAN'T OVERLOOK WELL-KNOWN WELFARE RECIPIENT SAM DONALDSON, WHO COLLECTS \$97,000 ANNUALLY FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IN THE FORM OF SUBSIDIES FOR HIS SHEEP RANCH IN NEW MEXICO...



A COMPLETE SET OF CORPORATE WELFARE POSTER BOYS IS AVAILABLE FROM WOMEN'S INT'L LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM, 215-563-7110

Radio on the Right

Ifill. They all believe in the newly established political power of talk radio. Limbaugh himself once said, "I have no interest in running for office. Why should I? I am setting the agenda right where I am...." (Limbaugh, Fall, 1994: 4).

Take, for example, Republican Senator Slade Gorton, from Washington State. Gorton was able to win his 1994 reelection bid despite not granting the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* (Washington State's second largest circulation paper) a single interview. Instead, Gorton chose to align himself with the talk radio circuit, appearing regularly on Seattle's all talk (and all conservative) station KVI. Gorton believes he could not have made it without talk radio. *Media Critic* magazine quotes Gorton as saying talk radio "made conservatives realize there were other people like them out there. So they were not afraid to speak out" (Hamner, 1995: 61).

Yet the fact that talk radio has been able to influence votes during an election period is really not surprising. Nor is it surprising that with the increased influence of talk radio came the shrinking influence of the newspaper. The same observations were made of television's impact when it was first used as a campaigning tool. (One major difference here, however, concerns the fact that there is an overwhelming majority of conservative talk radio formats, giving Republicans an considerable edge over Democrats in this arena.)

However, to have an influence over day to day policy is something different altogether. Television and other media outlets have, thus far, simply reported the movements of government, often only after the fact. They functioned more as a watchdog on the issues, rather than as a participant in them. Talk radio proponents, on the other hand, believe that they are going a step beyond the watchdog phase, and actually breaking through "The Beltway" via 50,000 watt radio stations. These stations have taken their microphones away from the journalists and placed them in the hands of a public ready to shout out opinions at every opportunity. And of course, leading these opinionated charges are the talk show hosts, who act as catalysts rather than mediators. Many, including President Clinton himself, have cited talk radio as being largely to blame for the fall of his national health care plan. An article in a June 1994 edition of *Forbes* magazine states, "The unsung heroes in this remarkable reversal of public-opinion fortune are talk radio show hosts." It even goes so far as to say, "Rush Limbaugh *et al.* deserve a Nobel award for

their Paul Revere-like sounding of the alarm" (*Forbes*, 6-20-94: 23).

It would be inaccurate to say simply that call-in radio "discussions" have had no impact on government legislation. Indeed, there is a great deal of evidence that indicates politicians are listening. The question is, listening to *what*? To the 60 second statements from callers who, because they sound emotionally charged, and thus can "make good radio," are able to make it past a screener and "chat" with an equally impassioned talk show host? This is not political debate, and it is not democracy. In his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, communications theorist and media critic Neil Postman points out that exposure to only the smallest bits of information can have a detrimental effect on a society's ability to function, especially when it serves as a replacement for in-depth analysis. One consequence is that it teaches the public to "believe that all political problems have fast solutions through simple measures-or ought to." (1986: 131). Complex investigative reports are going the way of the newspaper. That is, there are fewer of them and people are caring less about them. Sifting through a mass amount of information can be tedious. Worse, it can be boring. But sum it up in a few, tidy catch phrases, emphasizing the juicy parts, then it might gain some interest. For example, few talk radio shows made it a priority to explain the complex issues facing the Clinton Administration as it struggled over the decision on whether to commit American troops to the "peace-keeping" effort in Bosnia. On the other hand, mention Paula Jones, or say the words "I didn't inhale," and every talk radio listener knows what you're talking about.

This trivialization of politics occurs when glitzy issues of little or no consequence are discussed at length in place of more significant matters that may be too dull to ever make it as a topic of the hour. When an issue of potentially great significance does become a radio topic, it must first be watered down to fit radio's entertainment format. That usually means breaking a complex issue down into its most simplistic and, if possible, amusing parts. Journalist John McManus explains that the constant dilution of significant social issues into "the realm of entertainment does a disservice, because it disguises the present desperate straits in which we find our nation" (7-10-95: 25). A fragmented public, in search of a way to feel a part of political action, would best be served through an open discussion of real issues and hard facts. This is not happening on talk radio.

Compare the "debates" heard on today's radio program, where callers comment on the topic of the hour, with the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858, where discussions on a social issue would often last up to *seven hours*. Lincoln-Douglas audiences were no less impervious to becoming emotionally charged over an issue than modern day audiences. Indeed, Mr. Douglas once said to an overly enthusiastic audience, which kept interrupting his speech with shouts and applause, "My friends, silence will be more acceptable to me in the discussion of these questions than applause. I desire to address myself to your judgment, your understanding, and your consciences, and not to your passions or your enthusiasms" (Postman, 1986: 45). These were not unemotional audiences. But their emotions were cooled by an understanding of what it means to hear a prolonged, complex argument. That understanding is quickly fading among the talk show audiences of today.

Journalist Robert Wright in an article for *Time* magazine notes, "When town halls become call-in shows, deliberation loses and slogans become law" (1-23-95: 16). The most obvious example here is the "three strikes and you're out" law that was literally created by talk radio. After 18 year-old Kimber Reynolds was murdered by a career felon, talk-radio host Ray Appleton, also a friend of the girl's father, co-authored the bill. "Three strikes and your out" became a hot topic on talk radio, where citizens, angry at Kimber's senseless murder, called in to express their unconditional support for the bill. Politicians had no choice but to embrace the bill or risk being labeled soft on crime. Eventually, the bill grew in popularity and ended up in Clinton's 1994 crime package. Unfortunately, the law, explains Wright, turned out to be "more gratifying viscerally than intellectually...The law does nothing to raise the cost of the first two strikes, and meanwhile spends precious money imprisoning men past middle age, after most of them have been pacified by ebbing testosterone, free of charge."

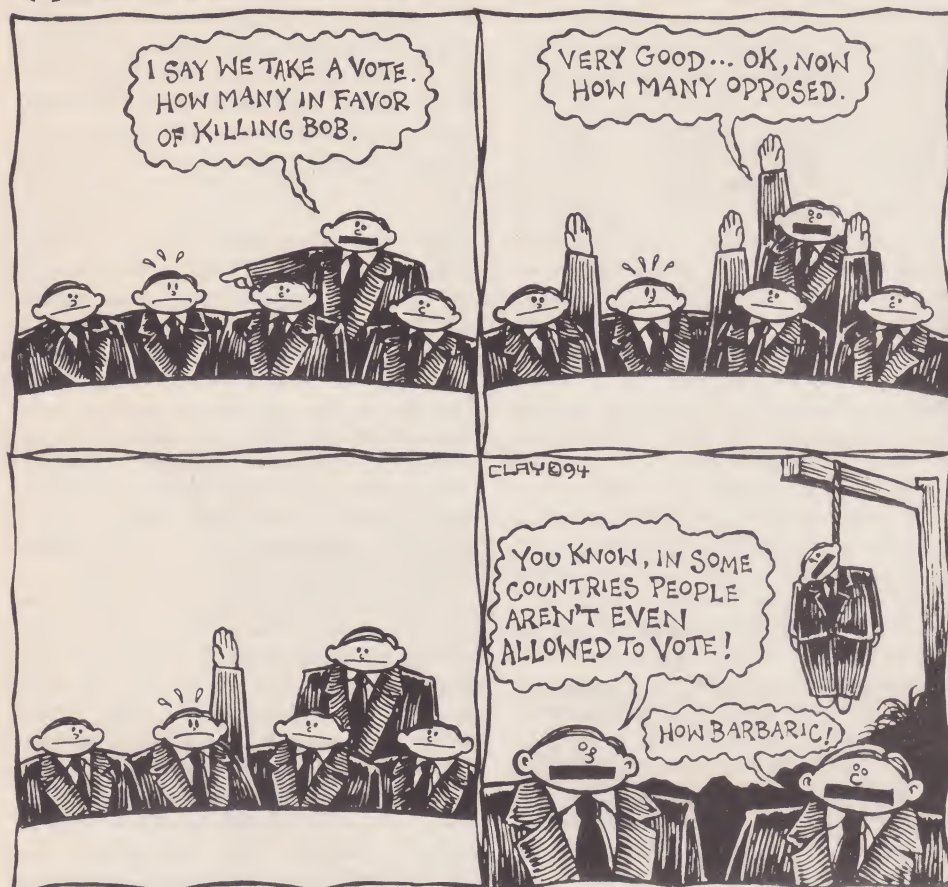
This is not the kind of democracy we should be proud of. What happens to a society that doesn't give itself time to study issues before acting on them? Knee-jerk reactions become law, while reason becomes the slow moving dinosaur left behind.

Right Wing Rule

By the mid-1990s the radio airwaves had become colonized by right-wing discourse, often parading as "centrist" or "moderate" along the continuum of political ideas. The

Radio on the Right

MEANWHILE... BACK IN THE CIVILIZED WORLD



Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1994 Clay Butler

conservative format became *de rigueur*. Stations running with strictly conservative programming, often with back-to-back-to-back conservative hosts were so common that the Democrats began toying with the idea of resurrecting the Fairness Doctrine, the now-defunct FCC rule that required all broadcasters to give equal on-air access time to opposing viewpoints. On a St. Louis call-in show in early 1995, President Clinton complained about not having enough air time to respond to all the right-wing talk radio tirades. Said Clinton: "After I get off the radio today with you, Rush Limbaugh will have three hours to say whatever he wants, and I won't have any opportunity to respond." In fact the power of many talk show hosts may run even deeper than Clinton's worried response might suggest. For example, in 1994 the 73 newly-elected House Republicans chose to attend a session held at the conservative Heritage Foundation rather than go to training orientation seminars regularly sponsored by Harvard University. The main guest speaker? None other than the omnipresent Limbaugh.

Of course there is no way of knowing precisely how much the conservative shift owes to talk radio. It is possible that the medium does more to simply *reflect* the predominantly traditional views of its audience than to *instill* such views in an otherwise mixed audience. What can be said for sure is that the term "liberal" has become a dirty word on the airwaves and that conservative positions on virtually every issue frame the exchanges. One reason for this was the strategic advantage of the Republicans: they could tap the popular anger and generalized mood of anti-politics that has engulfed talk radio far better than the Democrats, who controlled both Houses of Congress for so long. Talk radio merged with the conservative temper by exploiting massive public discontent over big government, bureaucracy, taxes, and the social demands of minorities, women, gays, and others. Aligned with these forces, and with the liberal intellectual "elites," Democrats became an obvious and easy target for militant right-wing talk show hosts. As Sidney Blumenthal writes: "This is a time of fear

and anxiety which has been dramatized by talk show hosts, who have maintained an angry Republican base, which feels displaced socially and politically." (*Investigative Report*, July 16, 1995) Since 1992 these emotions have been directed against a rather visible enemy and villain, the "liberal" President Clinton—and the even more villainous Hillary Rodham Clinton.

While more liberal voices such as Jackson, Leykis, and Hightower can be found on talk radio, they are relatively few in number; their messages are overwhelmed by the barrage of conservative voices. The political impact of liberals and progressives on the air is muted. One problem may revolve around the issue of style: as Hightower himself observes, liberals in general are simply "too dull and stuck up." (Fund, Spring 1995) The reality is that talk radio feeds on extremes, on passionate outbursts, on bombastic rhetoric. As such it gravitates toward a manichean way of posing questions, toward simplistic panaceas. Audiences, for their part, seem to want hosts to take a clear stand on issues. But liberals are famous for their ethos of compromise and bargaining that carefully strives to avoid extremes. This ethos runs against the grain of talk radio and its ongoing struggle for high ratings. The compromising in-between persona is much too boring for high-intensity media forums.

But talk radio is also permeated with an angry discourse of hatemongering and scapegoating that goes far beyond affirming a conservative outlook.

Angry Words

While the majority of words heard on the radio lean heavily to the right, it is another thing entirely to say they are "words of hate." Yet, that is the charge President Clinton and many others are making about talk radio.

In the days after the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building, Clinton gave a speech in which he called some radio broadcasters "purveyors of hatred." "We hear so many loud and angry voices in America today," said Clinton, "who leave the impression, by their very words, that violence is acceptable" (*Los Angeles Times*: A1). Although his aides later denied the president was talking about right-wing talk radio, few believed it.

Limbaugh was quick to respond, saying "The suggestion is irresponsible and vacuous; such insinuations can only have a chilling effect on legitimate discussion" (Limbaugh, 5-8-95: 39). The problem is,

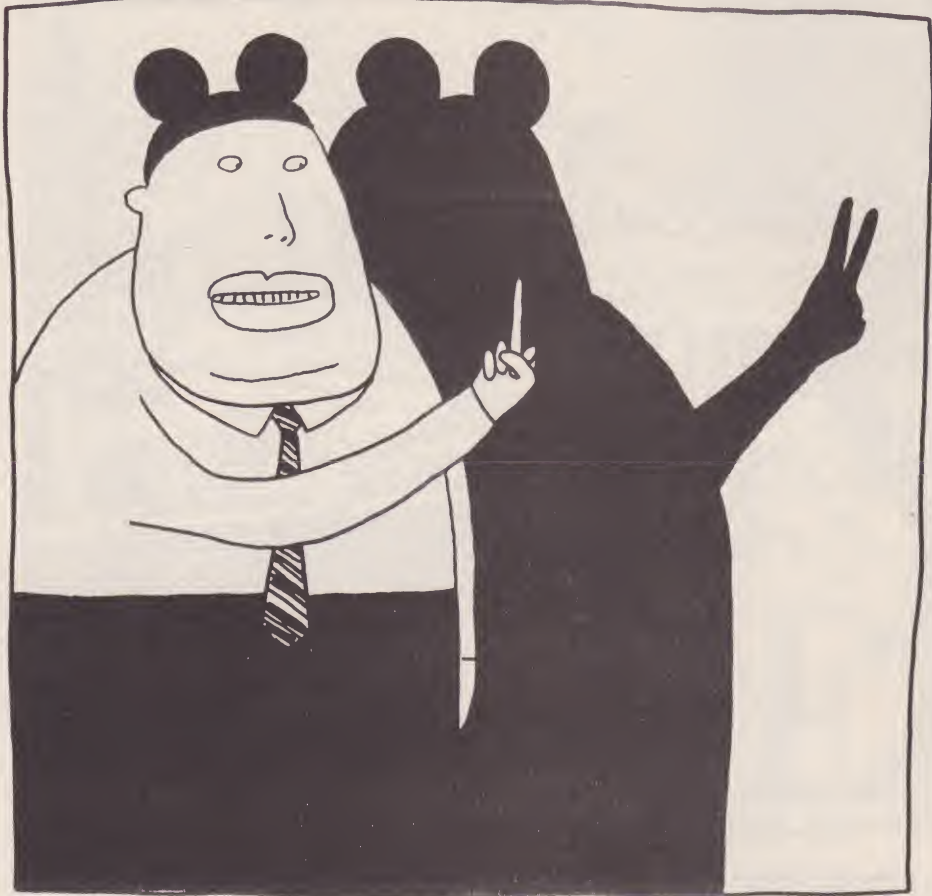
Radio on the Right

Clinton was probably not referring to right-wing talk radio. More likely, he was referring to the extremists who have hopped on the fervent radio bandwagon and gone beyond.

Limbaugh is a right-wing conservative. He is a staunch Republican, often referring to his show as "The Limbaugh Institute for Advanced Conservative Studies." When Clinton was elected President, Limbaugh labeled his shows "special editions" for an "America Held Hostage." He often uses song parodies to help him get his point across, such as one about the Kennedys, sung to the tune of "The Banana Boat Song (Day-O)": *"Up in Chappaquiddick Teddy look for romance, Kennedy clan is in trouble once more, JFK couldn't keep it in his own pants, Kennedy Clan is in trouble once more..."* (Limbaugh, 1992: 138). He's also been known to resort to name-calling, labeling one former U.S. Senator "Alan ('the Cadaver') Cranston, and describing Ross Perot as "a hand grenade with a bad haircut." These are all exaggerations, certainly. But they are intended to be. These are among the numerous tongue-in-cheek techniques used by talk show hosts to help entertain, and therefore maintain, their audience. While these antics certainly aren't flattering for government officials, neither do they suggest in any way that "violence is acceptable." And they are not "extremist."

"Extremist" is G. Gordon Liddy, a former conspirator in the Watergate burglary turned talk radio host. Until recently, Mr. Liddy was considered a black sheep in the world of politics after serving four years of a 21 year sentence for his involvement in Watergate. Today, he considers himself a hero...and many of his listeners agree. "He is viewed as a hero who tried to save society from the grips of the sixties counter culture that overwhelmed it...and was able to build on that theme, added with a new younger generation that doesn't remember what Watergate and its impact was really all about," is how an A & E investigative report on talk radio explained Liddy's new found popularity (7-16-95). Liddy simply refers to the scandal as an "occupational hazard...." His on-air "jokes" include the time he gleefully told his audience about his use of pictures of the Clintons for target practice. And during a "discussion" about the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Liddy, on his nationally syndicated show, advised his listeners, "You have two choices. You can die under ATF bullets or you can shoot back and try to defend your wife and family." By "defend" he means killing, saying "Head shot, head shots—kill

Stacey working on his campaign promises.



Mr. fish

the sons of bitches!"

Extremist is nationally syndicated Chuck Harder, a hater of Republicans and Democrats alike. Harder often opens up his microphone to militia members, whom he considers patriotic Americans there to act as a last line of defense against the "New World Order." Among his beliefs are that the armed militia movements are comprised of citizens with mainstream American beliefs, that the government is developing a "smart card" for citizens to carry around that would enable agents to spy, "Big Brother"-style, on everyone, and that US army troops are now training in Nebraska for a takeover of some sort (Cooper, 4-10-95: 486).

Extremist is New York talk show host Bob Grant, who openly supports neo-Nazi and white supremacist views. Responding to one caller who disagreed with his opinions of O.J. Simpson and the Oklahoma bomb-

ing, "What I'd like to do is put you against the wall with the rest of them, and mow you down with them" (Alter: 5-8-95: 44).

These are the shows that not only fail to open up the channels of communication, as all of them purport to do, but that help to create a climate of anger. Such a climate works to narrow discourse by inviting only the angriest voices into the discussion in search of only the most violent solutions. Their tactics go beyond entertainment value, and border on inciting violence.

Some media radio stations already understand this point. One Liddy affiliate in San Bernardino, for example, responded to his comments by dropping The G. Gordon Liddy Show from its afternoon lineup, with the explanation that his views "foster and encourage extremist action." The National Association of Talk show Hosts, on the other hand, chose to honor Liddy with its Freedom of Speech Award.

Radio on the Right



Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1993 Clay Butler

An Alienated Public

As the new media, be it extremist or not, continues to tap into the large reservoir of discontented Americans, it feeds into a growing feeling among the public that democracy, as we've always known it, no longer works. As one elected official is deemed as unresponsive as the next, participation through vote continues to lose its appeal. Calling-in to a talk radio show may be less of a first step toward a more involved public, and more of a last resort for an alienated citizenry.

In an article in the *Journal of International Affairs*, James Carey explains that call-in radio "represents attempts by a fragmented and dispersed public, which had not completely lost and forgotten the image of truly public life, to use the new media to its own advantage" (Summer, 1993: 2).

Talk radio seems to offer a way to circumvent the ballot box, break through the Beltway, and to simply be heard. However, what may be happening instead is that we are becoming more cynical than ever be-

fore. The numerous dissenting voices heard daily on talk radio create a climate of antipolitics, where "the government" is seen as "bad" irrespective of the current policies. Talk radio offers a forum where citizens are encouraged to call-in and voice their complaints, allowing one disgruntled citizen to hear the woes of another disgruntled citizen. Eventually, a picture begins to emerge of an overall incompetent, untrustworthy governing body.

What will happen to an ever decreasing faith in the political process? Most likely, people will continue to drop out of political life altogether. As disgust for the government festers in the talk radio arena, audiences will find more justification for withdrawing from the political process entirely than hanging in and working toward change. When all political action is deemed negative, simply because it is proposed by the government, it leaves no room for a debate over the issue to ensue. After all, who will be left to argue the positive side of a policy, other than the politicians who created them (whom we no longer will be able to trust)?

"The meaning of democracy changes over time because forms of communication with which to conduct politics changes," writes Carey. If that's true, then we must define what democracy means under talk radio. According to the numerous loud and dissatisfied voices heard on talk radio every day, our democracy is weak, largely ineffective, and overloaded with untrustworthy politicians. Who could participate in such a system?

If there is anything to be learned from the voices heard on talk radio, it is that the American public feels increasingly left out of the political process. It feels *representative* democracy is *not representing* its needs, and no amount of voting is going to change that.

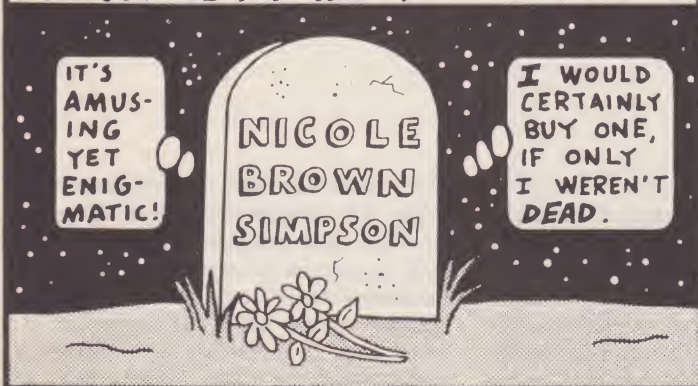
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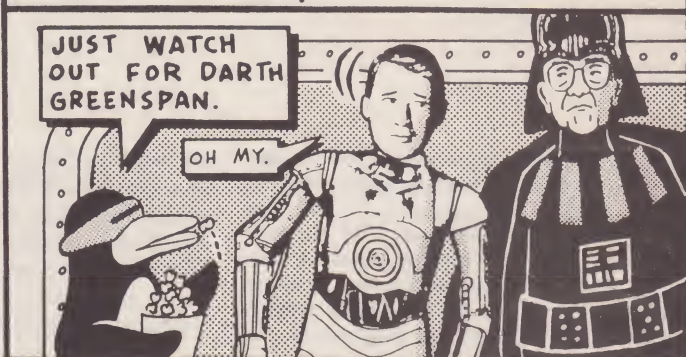
THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

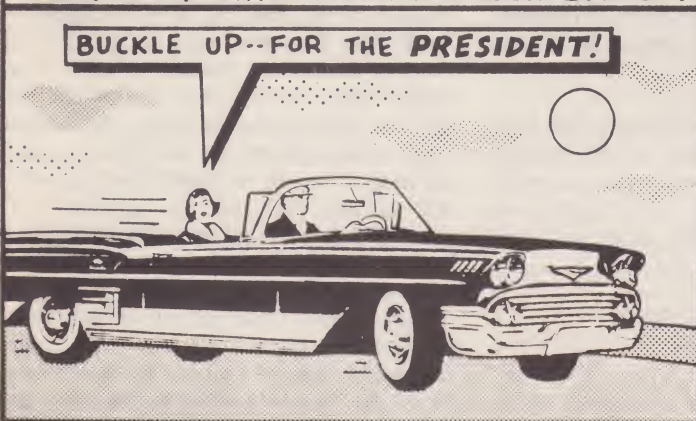
SOMETIMES WE CAN'T QUITE BELIEVE OUR OWN EARS...FOR EXAMPLE, DID WE REALLY HEAR A NEWSCASTER SAY THAT O.J. SIMPSON HAS TRADEMARKED THE T-SHIRT SLOGAN "TEAM O.J. -- JUSTICE FOR ALL"?



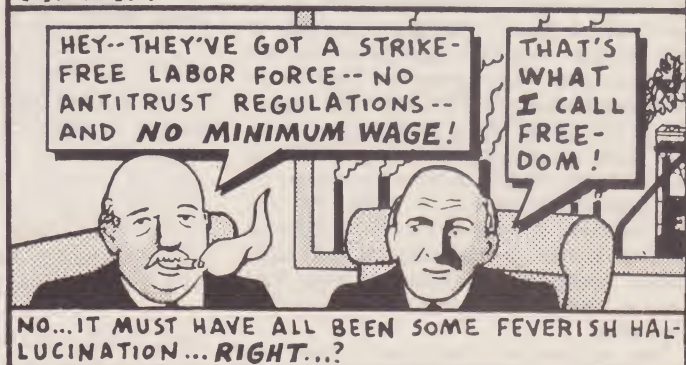
AND...DID WE REALLY HEAR AL GORE SAY, "ON THE DAY WHEN THE STAR WARS TRILOGY IS REOPENING IN AMERICA'S MOVIE THEATRES THERE IS INDEED A GALAXY OF GOOD NEWS... IN THE AMERICAN ECONOMY TODAY, THE FORCE IS WITH US"?



OR, FOR THAT MATTER, DID BILL CLINTON'S LAST RADIO SPEECH OF 1996 REALLY INCLUDE THE STIRRING PRESIDENTIAL ADMONITION THAT "WE MUST ALWAYS WEAR OUR SEAT BELTS"?



AND COULD WE HAVE POSSIBLY HEARD THAT THE NATION RANKED NUMBER ONE IN "ECONOMIC LIBERTY" BY THE WALL ST. JOURNAL WAS SINGAPORE -- A COUNTRY WHERE CHEWING GUM IS PUNISHABLE BY A YEAR IN PRISON?



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Nightmare Scenarios

An interview with Allan Nairn

By Danny Postel

Allan Nairn has covered U.S. foreign policy and operations since 1980. His articles have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The New Republic*, *Harper's*, *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, *NACLA Report on the Americas*, *Der Spiegel*, *the Guardian* (London), and *USA Today*, among other publications.

He is a contributing author to four books on U.S. policy in Central America. Subjects of his special investigations have included reports on the U.S. role in the creation of the Salvadoran death squads, Guatemala's G2 military intelligence service, and U.S. military strategy in Central America.

In 1994, *The Nation* published his investigation of U.S. military intelligence plans for the occupation of Haiti, including the revelation of ties between American Intelligence and the notorious paramilitary group the FRAPH. His covered the November 1991 East Timor massacre by Indonesian troops for *The New Yorker*, *USA Today* and public radio. Allan was threatened with jail and told to leave the country by the Guatemalan military in 1986. He was banned from Indonesia as a threat to "national security" in 1991, and arrested by Indonesian military intelligence for trying to enter East Timor in 1994. He later succeeded without their knowledge.

This interview was conducted in New York City on May 3, 1996.

Danny Postel: *How have arrangements like NAFTA and GATT affected the situations of workers in what we used to call the Third World—specifically, in countries like Guatemala, Haiti and Indonesia?*

Allan Nairn: They've put them under even more severe pressure, because measures like this play the workers of all countries off against the workers of all other countries. So, for example, let's take Mexico, where you have a slightly higher wage rate than prevails in Guatemala. NAFTA makes it easier for firms to cross borders among the U.S., Canada and Mexico; GATT does this on a world-wide basis. If workers in Mexico are trying to organize, and hold on to their wages or demand an increase, companies

can say OK, if you don't like it, we're going to Guatemala. And likewise, in Guatemala, where wage rates are slightly higher than in Haiti, when workers try to organize there, they can simply say, OK, you don't like it? We're going to Haiti. And so you have this constant downward pull on wages and working conditions as capital becomes more mobile.

DP: *You've talked about the phenomenon of Pocahontas pajamas being manufactured in Haiti and production shifting from places like South Korea to Indonesia. How do consumerism and imperialism intertwine under this new global order?*

AN: In the case of South Korea and Indonesia, up until 1987 many of the sneakers bought in the U.S. were made in South Korea. Then they had a modest democratic opening in South Korea; there was some

labor organizing and upward pressure on wages. The sneaker companies—in particular Nike and Reebok—*en masse* moved their production in large part to China and Indonesia, where you still have severe repression against labor and wages are at a lower level. In Indonesia the sneakers are made mainly by young women from the countryside; they earn less than two dollars a day. They then turn around and sell these same sneakers here in the U.S. for \$70, \$80, \$100. This enables people like Paul Fireman, the C.E.O. of Reebok, to make \$30 million in one year, as he did a couple of years ago. That was more than all of the sneaker makers of Indonesia made combined—that's more than 10,000 people. And that's a fairly typical situation. As the National Labor Committee recently documented in their report, in Haiti Disney is paying the workers who sew the pajamas 11-18 cents per hour. You have Michael Eisner sitting at the top of Disney, year after year one of the highest paid executives.

So you have these systems of world-wide corporate production that are very lucrative for the people on top, but hardly for anybody else. Workers in places like Haiti and Indonesia live under long-standing regimes of terror, backed by the U.S. If you try to organize in Haiti, you face paramilitary groups like the FRAPH, and now the remnants of FRAPH, which still exist, still have their arms. FRAPH was created at the urging of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency—backed by the C.I.A. In Indonesia you have the Indonesian army—armed, trained and supported by the United States—which routinely arrests and terrorizes and kills labor organizers. A couple of years ago there was the famous case of a woman named Marcina who was trying to organize a clock factory. She was abducted by the army, raped and mutilated. Last year the leading labor organizer in Indonesia, attempting to form an independent national union federation, was jailed by the army. So it's a very dangerous situation for the work-

The U.S. is now supporting war crimes tribunals for Bosnia and Rwanda—I think that's a good idea. But you've got to be consistent. You have to be willing to do the same for El Salvador and Guatemala and Haiti and East Timor—cases where the U.S. officials have been senior partners in crime, where, in a legal sense, they've been accomplices to crimes against humanity.

Investigative Journalism

ers overseas, and it also hurts the workers here in the United States, because jobs are shifted from the U.S. to places where labor is more repressed. The money that flows into the coffers of the firms like Nike or Reebok or Disney doesn't really find its way back to American workers; it just finds its way back to the top executives and the biggest shareholders.

DP: *Let's focus on that issue for a moment, on how NAFTA and GATT are affecting American workers.*

AN: The effect is a downward pull on wages, on work and environmental standards. Recently there was a decision by the World Trade Organization that said that U.S. environmental standards on oil refineries were an act of trade discrimination, because they made life difficult for some foreign oil companies that sell their oil in the U.S. So those standards now have to be revised—and revised downward—or the U.S. will face trade sanctions. What this does is it creates a mechanism where U.S., foreign and multinational corporations can challenge U.S. labor and environmental laws like OSHA—laws that are really the fruit of dozens and dozens of years of organizing and of popular effort—and undercut them. And it's the same with every other country that participates in these international trade regimes. So on one level you have these companies hopping from country to country, playing workforces off against each other, and on another level you have the legal gains that have been won by popular movements in one country after another being shot down on the grounds that they are restrictive of trade.

DP: *The response to NAFTA on the part of most of the American Left was simply to oppose it. What's your opinion of this? Some of the players on the anti-NAFTA team, after all, included Pat Buchanan and his nativist, protectionist "America First" supporters. Some have argued that NAFTA, in any event, is here to stay, and that the crucial question is how to work within its reality.*

AN: NAFTA should definitely be opposed. And although NAFTA is in effect now, it can be repealed. With six months notice, the U.S. can withdrawal from NAFTA, which would mean its collapse. In fact there's a bill, which has bipartisan sponsorship in Congress—it has about 30 sponsors on each the Republican and Democratic side—which would call for the U.S. to pull out of NAFTA unless a whole series of



Photo: OSGua (Organization in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala), POB 25333, Chicago, IL 60625.

conditions are met (and they won't be met). It's absolutely fundamental to fight this. Of course Buchanan and other racist, anti-immigrant forces oppose it. They're on the right side for the wrong reasons. You'll find people who have bad reasons for opposing unjust wars; that doesn't mean you then support the unjust war. In fact, one of the main challenges for people in this country who want to work in a constructive and progressive way is to take issues like this away from the racists like Buchanan. Buchanan correctly points out that multinational corporations and the corporate elite are bleeding the American working class and middle class, but he then tries to implicate immigrants and workers in foreign countries, and anyone in the United States who isn't a white Christian, as somehow being part of a plot to attack the American working class and middle class—which is ridiculous.

What we have to do is point out that there is a commonality of interests between the American working class and middle class, on the one hand, and workers over-

seas who are suffering from repression which is being sponsored by the U.S. government. Creating outfits like the FRAPH in Haiti, backing units like the Indonesian armed forces and the Guatemalan armed forces, which terrorize workers. There's really a common enemy there, and that's the policy of the U.S. government.

DP: *There seems to be a general sense—including among activists—that since Clinton was elected, U.S. military support for death squads and genocide in places like Central America has faded. U.S. policy toward Guatemala, the thinking goes, has shifted from being essentially military to being primarily economic/trade-based. When you spoke in Chicago at the OSGUA (Organization in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala) conference in April, you challenged this view. You claimed that there's as much U.S. support for terror and human rights violations in the "developing" world as ever, that there continues to be a joint project of repression between the U.S. and a number of its client states, with the U.S. serving as senior partner.*

Investigative Journalism

AN: You're right. The notion—and it's a pretty widespread one—that somehow the U.S. is less engaged militarily or in backing terror in Central America and elsewhere now than it was a few years ago is just false. The facts are just not well known. In Guatemala, for example, the Clinton administration is now engaged in extensive commercial sales of pistols and rifles. The CIA is continuing to work with the G2, the military intelligence service that coordinates assassinations and disappearances. Guatemalan officers, including G2 officers, are still brought up for training junkets in the U.S. by the Pentagon and the State Department. U.S. troops are actually still being sent down to Guatemala. There was a group that left just a few weeks ago to conduct operations in the countryside, publicly, side by side with the Guatemalan army, thereby giving the open stamp of approval of the U.S., to an army which is still raping the families of labor leaders, driving others into exile, assassinating and "disappearing" people. The U.S. still maintains a military trainer at the *Polytechnica* (the Guatemalan military academy), ostensibly there to teach English—in fact to teach how to handle U.S. weapons. The list goes on and on. The military and intelligence role of the U.S., although not well known, is as strong now as ever.

DP: *Let's talk about the situation in Haiti. Can you discuss the World Bank/International Monetary Fund structural adjustment "package" that President Aristide was forced to accept as a precondition for his return to power, and how this affected his ability to govern once he was restored?*

AN: Aristide, after his return by the U.S. troops in late 1994, and now his successor, Preval, have been implementing a World Bank/IMF structural adjustment for Haiti, which is the opposite of the popular movement program that Aristide was originally elected to implement. When he was first elected back in 1990 he ran on a program of overturning the table of exploitation, of redistributing wealth toward the poor. When he was in office he tried to double the minimum wage and create a social security system for workers. These initiatives were shot down by the Haitian elite and by the U.S. government. He was then ousted in the military coup in September of 1991. While in exile he was negotiating, first with Bush and then with Clinton. The U.S. demands were first that he accept the military occupation of Haiti, second that he abandon the popular pro-

The big corporate press...let Washington set their agenda. And so if the President isn't talking about East Timor day after day, they're not gonna report it day after day. And unless something get's reported day after day, it doesn't sink in; people don't remember it. That's completely apart from the accuracy of the reporting. The reporting is often inaccurate and skewed with a deep political bias in favor of the powers that be in Washington. This is because the news outlets are owned by rich people, by corporations who have the same basic economic and political interests, the same worldview, as the Pentagon, the State Department, Disney and Reebok. It's a community of interests.

gram and instead accept the World Bank/IMF program. He was reluctant to do this. But the U.S., on the ground in Haiti—via the Defense Intelligence Agency and the CIA—launched the FRAPH. There were CIA employees, people like Michel Francois, the Colonel and coup leader who was the overall coordinator of the repression in Haiti. These units terrorized the popular movement, killing anywhere from 3,000 to 5,000 of its organizers and leaders. They did so with U.S. weapons. Shipments of U.S. arms came in starting in June/July of 1993 to the FRAPH: 5-10,000 pieces, including machine guns, semi-automatic

pistols, etc. These were used to launch a reign of terror.

Aristide saw this. He was bluntly told by the U.S. negotiators, as former U.S. envoy to Haiti Lawrence Pezzulo put it to me: Look, the FRAPH is displacing the popular movement; they're becoming a leading force on the ground. You have no choice but to make a deal with us. Aristide thought that the only way to stop the bloodshed was indeed to make the deal. So he acquiesced; he agreed to a military occupation and to a World Bank/IMF program. The U.S. brought him back under those conditions. What the program consists of is laying off half of all government workers, privatizing some three dozen state enterprises, including the water company, the national port, the highly profitable telephone company, subsidies for export corporations, rewriting the corporate and tax laws in their favor, the creation of a whole new parallel court system to produce more beneficial decisions for foreign investors, etc. Axel Poiker of the World Bank, one of the main authors of the plan, told me that it would benefit what he called the "enlightened" Haitian business class but would hurt the poor of Haiti—although, he said, it would hurt the poor less than other structural adjustments had hurt the poor of other countries. This is the plan that is now being implemented. It's the opposite of the popular program. This means that what you have in Haiti is really not democracy by any reasonable description. Yes, they had a free presidential election. Yes, Preval was a popular candidate and won the election. But his hands are completely tied when it comes to the most fundamental economic and social policies. Or at least that's the way he sees it. In his campaign he made clear that he had abandoned the old popular program. So if Haitians wanted to opt for that program, they had no one to vote for.

DP: *Many had hopes that in spite of the process you've just described Aristide would find a way to sneak in key elements of the popular program, against the grain of the constraints imposed on him. To what extent do you think he was able to do this, if at all, and to what extent might Preval be able to do it?*

AN: Aristide didn't even try, and Preval isn't trying. On the contrary, Aristide was very compliant in his dealings with the World Bank and the IMF.

DP: *Why do you think that is? Given the substance of the popular program he was com-*

ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT



mitted to, why would he simply abandon it?

AN: Well, he originally abandoned it with a gun to his head, and with his supporters being killed on the ground. After he came back, that's another question. I think Aristide made a big mistake, because once he came back he had a certain bargaining power with the U.S., because the U.S. was stuck with him. They had made a big political investment in Aristide, and couldn't have tolerated his assassination or his being ousted again in a coup. That would have been a political disaster for Clinton, either one. So they really did have to stick with Aristide and let him serve out his term (until February of 1996). Given that, I think if Aristide had gone to the public and said, OK, we're abandoning the World Bank/IMF demands, we're going back to the popular program, I think he would have strengthened the hand of the popular movement immensely. I don't think he could have achieved a full return to that old program, but he could have gotten much more than he got.

What did happen, though, starting that

summer, was that the popular movement kind of took things into their own hands, and through street demonstrations caused the resignation of Smarc Michel, Aristide's Prime Minister, precisely over the issue of the IMF/World Bank plan. Seeing that, Aristide then dragged his feet during his final months on implementing the plan. He specifically delayed on going ahead with some of the privatization. Preval, however, has made it clear he'll be going ahead with the privatization.

DP: With the "unabridged" version of the package....

AN: Yes, that's pretty clear from his statements. Now both Aristide and Preval are working under economic coercion. When Aristide started delaying, U.S.A.I.D. immediately cut off funds for Haiti, and the World Bank and the IMF made it clear that if the privatization didn't start soon they would sever all international funds coming into Haiti. They're in difficult positions—there's no question of that. They need money to run the government on a

day-to-day basis. But many people in the Haitian popular movement have complained that Aristide and Preval haven't done nearly as much as they could in terms of bargaining harder and standing up against these institutions, and I think they're right. I think they have both failed in that respect.

DP: The 1994 U.S. invasion of Haiti posed a bit of an odd scenario for the American Left. Here was Big Brother invading a small Latin American country to topple a brutal right-wing military dictatorship and restore a massively popular leftist to power. All of a sudden anti-interventionists were debating whether the U.S. should intervene militarily in Haiti, and a majority of Haitians supported the invasion. What was your position?

AN: I opposed it. It was completely unnecessary. If the U.S. had wanted to remove the coup regime they could have done so, and could have done so without sending in U.S. troops.

The people running the coup regime—Francois, Cedras, Constant, on through the

Continued on page 46

Counter-Intelligence OVERCOMING PASSIVITY THROUGH OUR OWN DIY MEDIA

A movement (for want of a better word) of fanatics is upon us. Strange signals are filtering up from the sewers beneath the gutter press. Murmurs of de-control ooze up through man-holes into street culture. Rumors or Information War whisper through the mail, at the back of music gigs, in the "black-blocs" of demos. The zine, or self-published magazine, is the carrier for these heretical viruses. Its cultural conspirators have picked over the skips of the image factory and hauled home what has been discarded: office photocopiers, those ploughshares of business management. Subterranean blasphemers and political activists grope with glue-sticky fingers and wild-vdu eyes. The stench of copier ozone is on their clothing.

Under the right conditions the printed word, text and graphic can be released into the body politic and there take hold as living, growing structures. They duplicate—at source by their maker and then are reproduced at will by others. They replicate—when recycled and plagiarized by readers. Like LSD in the water supply, a little bit goes a long way. The anti-copyright moniker (a war cry of free access in a world dominated by property rights) encourages continued dissemination in ever expanding circles. Whether or not intentional, it is immediately subversive. For zines are highly approachable commodities and encourage dangerous dimensions to communication: two-way and many-directional dialogue. Contact with such lo-fi goods is contagious. The simplicity of their method of production is self-evident. The over-riding message in the medium is that *someone has done it themselves*. Now you do it yourself. (How does a broadcast TV program or a newspaper leave you feeling?) By means of this feedback loop the zine side-steps the active/passive relationship prevalent in most media, the relation set up between, on one side—and up high—the skilled communicator, writer, journalist, musician, political commentator, and on the other the audience—unskilled in everything but consumption.

Zines are an open invitation to contribute to people who have been told from birth that no matter how you feel, you can make no difference and that you should look to others—the doers, the stars, the talented and gifted—to make, shape and interpret your reality. The zine is its own subvertisement; how you have been reached is as critical as what you have been reached with. All spectators may become performers. They don't have to, but they can know that there are no barriers to prevent them. What we have here is a de-specialization of the written word. That's certainly a breakthrough in an era of Information Explosion which, despite its promise of a more demo-

Zines are an open invitation to contribute to people who have been told from birth that no matter how you feel, you can make no difference and that you should look to others—the doers, the stars, the talented and gifted—to make, shape and interpret your reality.

cratic, active, informed citizenry, has blown away or imploded the majority (even in the "advanced" West). No case can be made out for this to be some kind of sacred or all-levelling format. By all means get your hands on. What can be recognized is that the inherent technological barriers of media such as video (which demand huge resources or time, money, acquired technical skills and learned establishment formats) makes them closed shops with class and status a prerequisite to involvement. There is little or no threshold to entry into the medium of the zine. The ceiling to creation, on the other hand, is high. The happy amateur knows only the limits of discovery, experimentation and innovation.

Lo-tech means of delivery are of course problematic. We have been taught not to appreciate what something is or might be, but to judge by product sophistication. Though undeniably impressive, technical innovation (made possible by economic centralization) has one result in the creation of a level of Acceptable Quality Standards being determined, below which the "discerning" consumer has been trained to

switch off. Many have learnt to reject what does not match up to the dominant media output. On the newsstands, on TV and radio, the bark of authority is the only voice we hear.

We cannot match up to the total-immersion media of television, or with IPC and the weekly glossies, so we have cleared the pitch—where the game is played by rules devised to exclude us—and taken ourselves onto the terraces instead. Away from the market place, with its conformist and transient novelty, ideas too unacceptable or merely unfashionable or out-of-time in the mainstream can mutate and multiply. Here we become largely anonymous (surely a benefit) and status stands for naught. A free-form game can be carried on, where we don't have to compete, but play. Time-out can be called all the time. We can't get sacked or substituted or sold to another team. Since zines seldom run at a profit, they do not need to answer to the external

forces of advertisers, shareholders, government. They have to fit no one's world view but their creators' and ask no one's permission for existence (the majority also avoid most forms of payment for domination—taxation). Focos of independence can connect, dissolve and reconstitute with no coach, team captain or schedule controller, no middleman or shopkeeper of others' thoughts. Here the urge to express, to make common cause, to entertain, or simply to share experience, can run amok. Rogue realities take shape here. You answer to nobody and can appeal to no higher power in defense of your words. Here we can be fanatics—fanatics because we do not have, and do not want, the power to impose subjectivity as imperative truth.

Participants can enter and leave with little effective loss to the "movement," as a whole. With de-centered ways of self-into collective-organization, a particular zine may even become inconsequential. It is the creation of space for free-thought that is critical.

Certainly the individual zinemaker operates on a scale that the managers of mass

Zine Culture



Mark Neville

circulation can ridicule as irrelevant. But the sheer volume through variety of output from all directions has thrown up an environment for the cross-breeding interests or all those marginalized by mass communication: minorities, deviants, members of sub-

ry) media in which we can work freely and use to accelerate that destruction. Humble and disparate beginnings indeed for a praxis to transcend this scorched earth. But then the Ranters and Pamphleteers helped spark the English Civil War. A self-sufficient

For instance, Britain's Channel 4 has moved to create a climate ripe for suppression of computer bulletin boards with a Sunday night program set up to "prove" that uncensored and unregulated computer communications are but virtual porn syndicates in the making. Such direct intervention into personal affairs affects a minority (though a fast growing one).

Away from the market place, with its conformist and transient novelty, ideas too unacceptable or merely unfashionable or out-of-time in the mainstream can mutate and multiply...A free-form game can be carried on, where we don't have to compete, but play.

cultures and counter-cultures. One has only to flip through a copy of *Factsheet Five* or any of the smaller U.K. zine review zines—*ByPass*, *Zum*, *Xerox Heaven*—to expose oneself to a contagion of fevered imaginings. You'll probably spot something seeping out just up the street from you. And you never knew? Certainly such a find is a sad comment on lack of knowledge of those in close physical proximity, but it is contact now made nevertheless.

The Immediatists have discarded the zine for in-the-flesh communication. But does the mediation of print and post make it somehow less than, or preclude the possibility of later, face-to-face relations in congresses, meetings, collective actions and celebrations? A zine through the mail can fill a hole as effectively as a letter bomb can make one. Now, I don't live next door to the people I get on best with and until we have the economic liberty to rebuild our living spaces, or until we have the incomes to take ourselves off to our communes and watch society crumble from the margins, then this is one (in ways maybe unsatisfacto-

communications system is a solid foundation for community re-creation. Two currents in the "zine pool" mark routes towards oppositional autonomy. Amateur Press Associations (APAs)—constitutionally private members' zines—have carved out collectively sponsored, self-contained and hence completely censor-free arenas for uncommon and uncompromised desires. Whilst in the U.K. the Free Information Network (FIN) is organically federated across the country by zine and telephone tree, linking the metropolis to the backwoods to break the grip of the Road Lobby over the natural environment and to provide free festival information and organization. Some FIN group members have gone to jail for the heinous crime of helping to create spaces that you do not have to pay to enter.

The zine swims in a sea of hostility, an enmity based on opposition to the self-activity it embodies. Centralized media promote indolence and passivity. Contestation of its reign is met with a number of responses. The harshest is the Ban and Burn tactics of allergic recoil and outrage.

It is indirect censorship that is endemic. A deafening silence on questions of human value echoes through the mainstream, an earbashing roar of white media noise, shiny beads and fashion trinkets wipes out personal experience and imposes a national "consensus." If the contestation is ripe for it, the culture industry may even use those nominally in opposition to regenerate itself. Adopt and Debase strategies neutralize through enclosure and co-optation. The bizarre, the radical, even the distasteful at times, become—if handled correctly—marketable when couched in the correct lather and blather.

When economic viability in a monopolized marketplace dictates what is "successful" communication then society is placed under a collective blindfold. Under such conditions, the tortured ramblings of the Xerox Kid are as necessary an antidote to external control as were the Samizdat novels in the U.S.S.R., bashed out 3 or 4 copies at a time through carbon paper on typewriters. At the very least we might catch a glimpse of how things just might be.

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Radio-Activist MICRO-RADIO IS TAKING OFF

Somewhere in Seattle there is a 75 watt transmitter attached to an antennae, broadcasting bizarre music and local news and interviews to a downtown neighborhood. It's called FUCC Radio, and it's Seattle's contribution to the growing pirate radio movement.

"We're trying to decide what other word we can use besides 'pirate' because that's sort of a misnomer," FUCC founding member DJ Azerbyjane said in a recent interview. "Pirate" implies theft, but your airwaves have already been stolen from you in the first place." Terms like "micro-powered," "low-powered" and "community radio" are used by other stations across the country.

Micro-radio is foremost about community communications, about localized discussion of local issues. Supporters claim the small range contains the greatest potential for democratic involvement and for changing the notion that radio is a one-way communication device. FUCC 89.1, broadcasting most afternoons and weekday evenings, is an experiment in community radio.

Once Upon a Time

The Radio Act of 1934 was the last act concerning radio before the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The Radio Act marked an end to a powerful public debate about the use of airwaves for public interest versus commercial profit.

Despite widespread public outcry against the hucksterism of commercial radio and overwhelming public support for the preservation of educational, religious and community stations, the Radio Act called for the establishment of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to help make sure the airwaves remained in the hands of the highest bidders. As with any new resource, questions concerning what kind of ownership would best serve the public interest could have been decided in many different ways. In this case, legislators ignored the public's wishes as well as their arguments, and turned the use of the airwaves over to

commercial interests.

The only remnant of public interest in the act was the clause that airspace would be rented, not given, to corporations, and that they would be required to provide public interest broadcasting. The basic assumption that the airwaves belong to the people was still intact.

In 1996 Congress passed the Telecommunications Act, which rolled back regulation that was intended to prevent individual corporations from gaining control of too large a chunk of the American media. Many media critics cite the act as a silent overthrow of the assumption of public ownership of the airwaves. Big business wrote the legislation to cater to its own interests, and

Micro-radio pioneers aren't interested in making money—with no commercials and little outside support those who choose to run their own radio stations usually do so at a financial loss. They're interested in using radio as a tool for establishing community-based and non-corporate communications....

uniformly avoided any discussion of the issue on commercial radio and television stations—which it happens to own.

The lack of public debate over the use of communications tools and the assumption that society is always best served by those with the largest financial interests in maintaining the status quo is what drives many people to micro-radio. Reading from Robert McChesney's landmark *Telecommunications, Mass Media, and Democracy*, running interviews with Noam Chomsky and other media critics, and discussing the political implications of a corporate-owned communications network with local experts and community activists, micro-radio pioneers intend to revive the debate through grassroots amplification, whether the airwaves' tenants and the FCC likes it or not.

Community Radio

Micro-radio pioneers aren't interested in making money—with no commercials and little outside support those who choose to run their own radio stations usually do so at a financial loss. They're interested in using

radio as a tool for establishing community-based and non-corporate communications networks—the same thing public radio advocates fought for in the 1920s and '30s. With the passage of the Radio Act and the resulting development of gargantuan powerhouse stations radio and television were developed as one-way broadcast media, speaking to as large an audience as possible.

The only license available for broadcasting under 100 watts limits the broadcasting radius to ¼ mile. The estimated cost of legally starting a radio station is \$50,000. It costs \$2,030 just to file a license request with the FCC, along with show of "significant financial backing."

Though it's impossible to come up with any conclusive count, members of the National Lawyers Guild at the Media and Democracy Congress last year estimated that there are 200 to 400 micro-radio stations currently on the air in the U.S.

Radio Interference

The reason the FCC and FCC-sanctioned stations give for shutting down low-power broadcasts is the possibility that the signals of unlicensed stations will bleed over, interfering with frequencies nearby on the dial, as well as with government air communications.

Stephen Dunifer is the founder of Free Radio Berkeley in California, a pirate radio station that has been fighting attempts to shut it down through the courts. Dunifer says that complaints about bleeding are unfounded, and that he and many others use signal limiters that prevent any drift. According to Dunifer, Free Radio Berkeley's signal is actually the cleanest in town, and super-powered signals from big stations are far more likely to bleed than the low-powered ones.

The low power and low range of micro-stations have been hailed as two of their greatest virtues. Luke Hiken, member of the National Lawyers Guild and defender of micro-radio, said that the goals behind micro-radio dictated that a station's broad-

Alternative Radio

casting range should not be any further than the distance a listener could travel by bike to respond to something he or she heard. DJ Popeye Kahn said that, although FUCC has a 75-watt transmitter, it is only broadcasting at 30 watts, which covers a range of about 5 miles depending on weather conditions. "We want to communicate directly to this community," Kahn explained.

Programming provocations

Almost all of the music on FUCC is independent. Everything from African drums to opera can be heard, often layered or mixed.

"We don't have some kind of weird programming where we have to have our show fit into anything," said FUCC DJ Snatch. "I know a lot of pirate radio stations which obviously, for good reasons, are trying to focus their work and say, 'We are

cast live shows. People that don't have a lot of money to get in or whatever, it's there on the radio live," DJ Azerbyjane said. She describes her work with FUCC as "distribution of information, as far as we can go."

"I think what FUCC has done that no other station has done is the way we're approaching it," DJ Snatch explained. "It's a collective and it's really a collective of un-unified individuals. But it is about freedom of speech, and that's really exciting to me. It's about community involvement, whatever that means. I think that will lead to a lot of conflict, which is great. I'm into conflict."

Pirate Women

Pussy Cock Juice (PCJ) is a weekly show put on by three young women, DJ Frankie, DJ Azerbyjane and DJ Snatch, featuring independent music, interviews and "uncensored wildness." The women are outspoken

people she studies. Frankie says she feels "frustration with the limits of traditional sociology in that it focusses on a very small audience. I'm interested in approaching a larger audience both through video & film and through radio." Instead of approaching only academics, or only the literate for that matter, radio allows her to talk to anyone and everyone in range. Frankie believes that sociology and the micro-radio movement are concerned with the same goals. She says that both are "trying to figure out how we can live together in more harmony and peace and democracy."

Starting your own radio station

Equipment kits for micro-radio are available all over the World Wide Web. All you need to start your own station is about \$1,000 for transmitter and antenna, plus whatever music equipment you want, a land-

lord who either doesn't know or doesn't care, and, preferably, a P.O. Box and a direct phone line. No one has ever gone to jail—yet—for pirating the airwaves. Those that have been slapped with fines have usually ignored them and continued broadcasting, although Black

"I think what FUCC has done that no other station has done is the way we're approaching it,...It's a collective and it's really a collective of un-unified individuals. But it is about freedom of speech, and that's really exciting to me...I think that will lead to a lot of conflict, which is great. I'm into conflict."

a rap station so that we can get out all the rap that isn't being heard.' But I think what we're doing is we're like 'Hey! We're got this kick-ass equipment and a lot of cool people and we're doing whatever the fuck we want!'"

Some would-be listeners are annoyed with the level of profanity on the air at FUCC. "So they've said 'fuck' on the air. So what? What now?" said one radio executive who thinks that relentless references to sex for the intent of shocking listeners minimizes what micro-radio has to offer and only encourages opponents of free speech.

The FUCC crew are unapologetic, yet recognize the value of expanding their programming content. Besides creative mixes of obscure music, FUCC features live talk radio, with shows such as the Unabonger's Rush Hour Revolutionaries. A direct phone line to the studio was installed so that conversations and live interviews could take place. DJs also sometimes mix ambient music with recorded interviews which they borrow from fellow members of the Seattle Independent Media Coalition.

"That's what FUCC does a lot is broad-

and use their show to explode traditional notions of femininity and acceptable female behavior.

"Why am I doing it? Well, freedom of speech, it's as simple as that." DJ Snatch said. "I think the airwaves are ours and we should use them. Music particularly, but information in general, is such a nightmare of corporate control that it's really hard for people—for the little people that don't have the right connections, that don't have white faces or big bank accounts—to be able to get their music out."

PCJ did an interview with singer/performer Diamanda Galas, and also aired interviews with author Kathy Acker and ex-Dead Kennedys member Jello Biafra. "We want to have Left Bank Books do a book review every week, and I'm trying to do interviews with people every week who are just amazing, interesting people who don't get any kind of notoriety."

DJ Frankie is a sociology student, and her involvement with micro-powered radio is linked to her interest in sociology. She experiments with radio and video as a way to explore the stories and problems of the

Liberation Radio in Springfield, Illinois, had its equipment seized by the Attorney General's Office this last January.

Free Radio Berkeley has served as a clearinghouse of sorts for micro-radio stations worldwide. Besides creating a volunteer infrastructure and highly organized programming schedule, Dunifer has been building transmitters and selling or giving them away for years. He built a transmitter for former Haitian President Bertrand Aristide to create a radio station for street kids in Port Au Prince, and has aided democratic rebel forces in Chiapas, Mexico, as well.

Five thousand dollars covered the total costs of starting up FUCC's operations, including equipment, monitors, one stationary transmitter and a portable one, which has been taken on tour with rock bands, as well as to last year's Media and Democracy Congress in San Francisco.

-Flona Morgan

This article appeared in **The Glass Onion**, weekly arts supplement to the University of Washington **Daily**. Reprinted with permission of the author. For more information contact: Free Radio Berkeley, 1442 A Walnut St, #406, Berkeley, CA 94709.

Expletive Deleted! IS 'F...' PART OF ANY LANGUAGE?

"I lived with this fucking guy named Bernie. This motherfucker used to drink huge amounts of fucking beer every single day. The fucker would come strolling through the fucking door wasted. The fucking thing was when my kid would be visiting. My fucking kid was 5 years old and it was like a fucking meeting of the fucking minds—a five year-old and a fucked up adult. I think my fucking kid had more brains. Unfucking believable!"
—(My buddy at work telling me a story)

The great labor folksinger Utah Phillips was on stage in a club on the south side of Bethlehem, PA. The granola heads and the peace-and-justice crowd cut short their conversations and quieted down in anticipation of the show. Utah fine-tuned his guitar. There he was, a portly, whiskered old guy who could have passed as Santa Claus. Utah looked up and smiled. Utah doesn't just sing, he teaches.

"SHIT, PISS, FUCK, CUNT, TITS, COCK, BALLS," he bellowed at the startled audience. "You see friends, the horrible words I've expressed are the vernacular of the *working class*. They are words that make many people uneasy. But they are words all the same, words used by working men and women all over the earth. There's been an attempt by the elites to make these words go away. What it is, is an attempt by one group of people to wipe out the language of another group of people. An attempt to win cultural dominance. The working people of this world created these words to express themselves. We can't allow the elites to take them all away."

I never laughed so hard in my life! Then Utah started strumming on his guitar and the world was beautiful again.

You see, the word "fuck" is a beautiful word. It's a word I use constantly to describe almost everything. Fuck this! Fuck that! Fuck it all! Fuck you! It's not gutter language; it's people language. Tell me if you think the little ditty composed by George Carlin referring to a put down game is funny:

"So you want to play the dozens

*and the dozens is a game,
but the way I fuck your mother
is a god damned shame."*

I think it's funny. Do you think it's funny? Yes, it's fucking funny!

Often times, I'll be reading a mainstream magazine and the writer starts dribbling about the lowering of standards in the writing profession. The writer concerns himself with the barbarians at the gates. The writer fronts himself as a barrier to the hordes, making sure to keep the dirty-fingered from the cultural elite. Fuck those kinds of writers.

Or I pick up a magazine and its editors refuse to print the word "fuck." Instead, they use "expletive deleted" or my all-time

Often times, I'll be reading a mainstream magazine and the writer starts dribbling about the lowering of standards in the writing profession. The writer concerns himself with the barbarians at the gates. The writer fronts himself as a barrier to the hordes...Fuck those kinds of writers.

favorite—"F..." Now I ask you, is "F..." a part of the language, any language? Oh, I know, there's holy rollers and kiddies out there who might be reading the precious magazine. Only thing is, I've heard holy rollers curse their heads off. Once as a kid I put dog shit on the steps of a convent and then rang the doorbell. The nun that answered the door should have been thrown in jail for what she said. As for the kiddies, well, they are learning it on the streets anyway.

It's not just the retarded right-wingers, it's the retarded left-wingers, too, much more damaging because they should know better. Michael fucking Moore of *TV Nation* said it best in an interview I read in a local paper. Asked about the left, he said, "No sense of humor. They love talking to themselves and they love having a lot of meetings. They hate John Candy. They hate Rhea Perlman. John Belushi, Eugh! Dan Akroyd, Ugh! They want *Bob Roberts*. They want something more high brow." Asked about the folk singer Bob Seger, Moore replied, "Oh, fuck him."

P.S. Mueller, a nationally syndicated car-

toonist, and all around good guy, lives in my neighborhood. We frequently run into each other at a local bar. What do you think Pete says to me? You think he says hello? Fuck no! In a baritone voice he belches at me, "FUCK YOU!" I reply, "Fuck You." We then start drinking and talking.

Rest assured, proponents of the word "fuck" will win the day. First, there's more of us than there are of you. We're knocking at the gates and you can't keep the fucking gate closed. Second, you whine about ill-mannered speech, we reply in full force, "Fuck You." And what do you do? You run away like the pussies you really are. Third, we've converted your kind and are winning more converts daily. More and more, I open up the pages of papers and magazines and what do I see? I see the word "fuck," that's what I see. Your kind can't communicate to us without using the magic word. If you can't communicate, then we sure 'nuff ain't

going to read your fucking high fallutin' rosy prosy articles will we? You know the fucking answer to that one, dontcha.

In fact, let's face it, the word "fuck" has become so ingrained in the psyche of the American people that I'm declaring victory for all my fellow fuckheads. It's gotten to the point where the vast majority of people don't even bat an eye at the mention of the word. So why all the grief and worry? Fuck it. Live a little. Say it loud and proud. FUUUCKK!

Give up your foolish ways. Let's do billboards: "Buy a fucking Chevy today." Let's take it to the boob tube. How about a floor wax commercial? A middle American housefrau appears on the screen wearing an apron and holding a mop in her hands. She begins her pitch. "My fucking husband and my fucking sloppy kids always leave a mess. But luckily I have Shitwipe™ Wax to make it all better." Boom. End of fucking ad. Let's broadcast Dickie Nixon on tape pounding his head against the wall muttering...fuck, fuck, fuck. Dan Rather on the TV news? Simple enough. "In closing,

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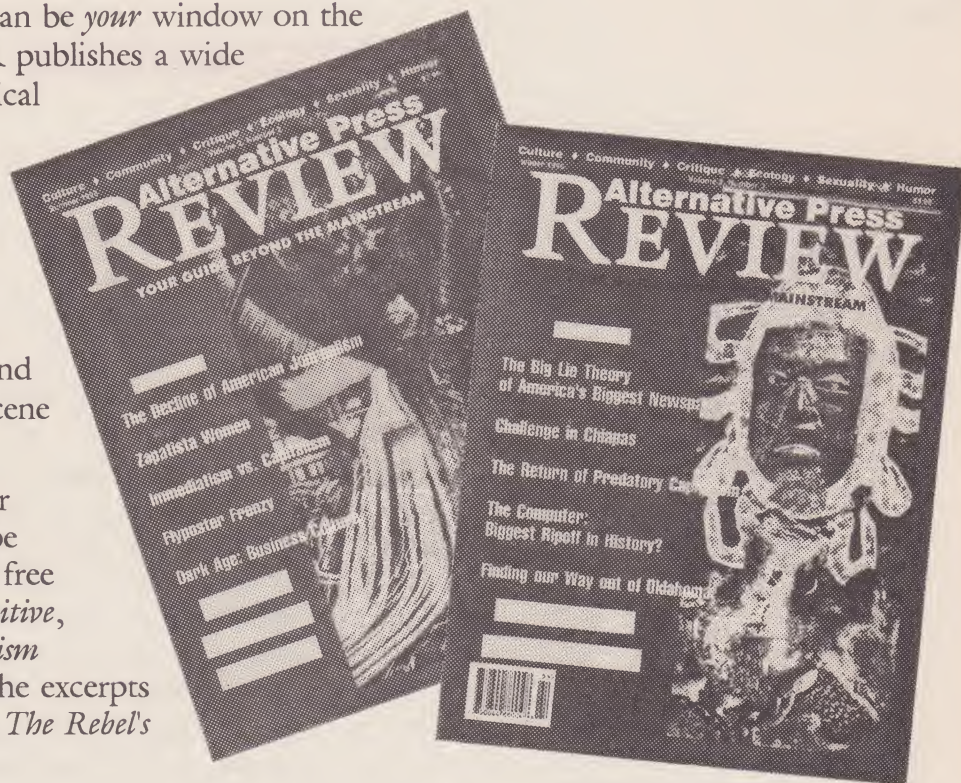
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APR#8

Excavating the Instant Ruin

Alfredo Botello

C hecked in the other day with pop culture's avatar to see what trend was on the brink of becoming marketable at Macy's. MTV, with its scattershot demographics and shapeshifting imagery, has an unsettling knack for promoting the breakthrough of acts a bit too palatable for the underground, yet racy enough to appeal to the hip youngish middle class. And this has nothing to do with nice guys Weezer or fave Icelandic import Bjork, either. Take a moment between vids to notice the sets behind the VJ's. Traditional Oriental rugs are tossed haphazardly over a concrete slab floor. Silkscreens of multicolored ethnic masks cover walls fauxed to look like vandalized marble. An exposed I-beam supports a steel mesh spiral stair leading to a juryrigged catwalk. The overall impression is that of the warehouse loft lovingly redecorated, but not repaired. Beamed into just about every cable ready home in the country, MTV has confirmed our suspicions: the Instant Ruin aesthetic has become *de rigeur* for the day.

You've seen it in boutiques—the lamp stand that was once a couch leg, or the decayed wooden plank, bent nails intact, being pawned off as a bench. Large chain stores like Cost Plus and Pier One Imports sell instant ruins in volume along with more conservative fare, while virtually the entire MTV set can be bought at Urban Outfitters, which recently opened its 23rd store nationwide. For the uninitiated, an in-house primer is offered free at the door. *The Slant* reads like a bad boy *Baedeker's* with J. Crew intentions.

In "Excavating the Instant Ruin" Alfredo Botello describes one of the latest marketing aesthetics aimed at capturing a higher percentage of young, hip professionals—seemingly every businessman's favorite demographic—disposable income. This essay, revised for publication here by the author, originally appeared in **Plazm**, a visually impressive art magazine, featuring a notably free reign on typographical design and "dedicated to the unrestricted expression of ideas." Subscriptions to **Plazm** are \$16/year (U.S.), \$22/year (Canada/Mexico), & \$42/year (outside North America) from POB 2863, Portland, OR 97298-2863.

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To manufacture an aura of intimate history, the ruin aesthetic relies on the shorthand of an evocative surface. This isn't, however, the crash course in history and multiculturalism of the Instant Ruin's precursor, the 18th century English garden, in which the recreated ruin of a Roman temple might have been one stop along a stroll that also included a Gothic cottage and Chinese pagoda. The eclectic garden furnished the urbane gentleman a light handed object lesson in the passing of great civilizations. Today's crude tin lantern, on the other hand, may look like the salvaged remnant of a 19th century brick factory, but it is not marketed as a show-and-tell in the history of the labor movement. No secret here: industrial urban decay makes for great eye candy.

So what's behind today's ruin phenomenon? And why are stores like Urban Outfitters so damn popular? In part, the Instant Ruin can be seen as a backlash against the placeless digital landscape. As a counterproposal, faux relics offers us tangible symbols of cultural continuity and the implicit reassurance that the global village can still be experienced as a village. But they are only symbols.

At its core, the popularity of the Instant Ruin is a simple case of guilt by association. The ruin successfully exploits Kaffeeklatsch sociological speculation of the "Just imagine who made this," and "Under what intriguing circumstances?" variety by combining sellable urban decay with appealing '90s affinities. What better way to demonstrate to friends your passion for recycling than by filling your display shelves with the dross of the salvage yard, or at least its convincing imitation? Such "found" objects are, of course, far from pristine, which just goes to show how willing you are to embrace an aesthetic of imperfection and accommodation. Urban Outfitters offers us a handy synthesis of these affinities: a tin lunch box, made in India, streaked with rust colored paint.

Support of recycling and the celebration of pluralism may be agreeable, but an image of commitment is not the same as the real thing. Like most fads, the Instant Ruin looks best to the detached, ironic eye which seeks no content beyond the surface. No need to justify here—we're just having fun.

However, the stylish young urbanite does not find the same "it's so bad, it's good" frisson in the Instant Ruin that he does in the latest Ed Wood rehash. Perhaps the warping lens of history will treat the verdigris-streaked sconce with the same ironic smirk as it now does the lava lamp, but at present, the Instant Ruin is being confused for a meaningful totem of the sympathies it professes. What we're left with is designer slumming, an appropriation of the blue collar aura without the class envy. Just because it's fashionable to knock back beers in a microbrewery that looks like a factory does not mean we want to work in one.

Architect and critic Michael Sorkin writes that we are experiencing a "crisis of authenticity." If everything can be convincingly forged, who cares about the original? Grape bubblegum is never sour and no real country road ever looks as good as the snapshots in Sunset. The Instant Ruin is inherently a forgery, but there is a curious ambivalence here which distinguishes it from the counterfeit ten spot. The verdigris on the copper lamp is not quite right, a shade too bright, and the fake worm holes on the armoire are just too regular and crisp. This, of course, makes perfect Madison Avenue sense—it's self advertisement which neatly circumvents the authenticity question. At first covetous glance, the wannabe antique may seem precious and rare, but on closer inspection, it's obviously a copy, probably an affordable one. Our fetish for the fake may glibly avoid difficult criticism in favor of irony and unabashed appreciation, but without a healthy dose of knowing self-reflexivity, ruin consumption reeks of self righteousness. Time to slap another coat of polish on those welder's boots.

One thing makes it clear that all of this is more than just premature millennial doomsaying: big money is getting in on the action. The scale of the Instant Ruin has recently leapfrogged from the bookshelf knick knack or boutique remodel to the entire shopping mall. In 1994, a 40,000 square foot shopping center inspired by the ruin aesthetic was opened in Costa Mesa, California. At The Lab, shoppers are treated to theme park images of a rough cityscape from within the safe walls of a suburban shopping complex. Dubbed the "anti-mall" by locals, the Lab simulates

urban decay using architectural armatures made of splintered lumber, exposed rebar, unfinished concrete, and rusting oil drums. The project's developers hope that this seemingly anti-commercial coif will appeal to the jaded Gen X market, a 40 million strong consumer army nationwide. Poetry readings and film screenings have been scheduled alongside Spring Clearance Sales and Christmas close-outs. And yes, you will find an Urban Outfitters here.

All of this isn't to say that the ruin aesthetic can never go deeper than its own corroded surface. Seattle's popular Gas Works Park comes to mind, Grunge's sculptural soul sister and

...the Instant Ruin can be seen as a backlash against the placeless digital landscape. As a counterproposal, faux relics offers us tangible symbols of cultural continuity and the implicit reassurance that the global village can still be experienced as a village. But they are only symbols.

inspiration for every gritty movie backdrop since the dank retropolis of Brazil. In the early '70s, civic leaders had enough of a handle on the Zeitgeist to realize the attraction an abandoned oil refinery might hold, so they laid down some grass, put up a sign, and saved the local art and parks commissions no mean sum. According to the Park's project managers, it is one of the city's most popular and has become a model of adaptive reuse for designers and planners. Born of an authentic ruin and a community's consensus about its public life, Gas Works Park distinguishes itself decisively from its instant counterpart.

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The Bisexual Closet

Monica Warden & Kennette Crockett

In "The Bisexual Closet" Monica Warden and Kennette Crockett describe the increasingly obvious failure of the homosexual/heterosexual duality to exhaust the possibilities of human sexuality. For more and more people, it is becoming necessary to define a more inclusive form of sexuality, which threatens not just traditionally heterosexual institutions, but also the often exclusivist foundations of gay identity. This essay first appeared in **Girlfriends**, a relatively new bimonthly, which bills itself as "America's Fastest-Growing Lesbian Magazine." Subscriptions to **Girlfriends** are \$24/year or \$4.95/issue (U.S.), \$34/year (Canada), & \$39/year (elsewhere) from 3415 Cesar Chavez St., Suite 101, San Francisco, CA 94110, or by phone at 800-475-3763.

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All around 21-year-old Rainbow Cooney, people are waving, shouting, and dancing. It's Gay Pride Day in Chicago, and Rainbow is calling out to old friends from the top of a festive float, as she has every last Sunday in June for the past few years.

Ironically, 1996 marks the first Pride event that Rainbow attended as an official, rather than honorary, member of the lesbian and gay community. "I was never attracted to a woman before, it was always guys," Rainbow explains. "And then I met Lily." Rainbow had known Lily Cruz for a long time as the best friend of Rainbow's older sister, Erin, a lesbian about town. When Cupid's arrow found its mark, everything changed. Overnight, Rainbow was promoted from Erin's straight sister to a card-carrying dyke.

In some ways the transition was easy. In her role as "cool, supportive, little sister" Rainbow used to go—sans boyfriends, of course—to the softball games, the parade, even the bars. But her new membership has a price attached to its privileges. In particular, Rainbow's straight past vanishes, just like that. "I am gay right now," she says. With a glance toward her new girlfriend at her side, she laughs, "I've been gay for six months."

How do we understand Rainbow's familiar story? Twenty-five years after Stonewall, it's becoming more difficult to interpret her saga along classic, lesbian-feminist lines, whereby a woman's straight experiences are a bad case of false consciousness, a tragic result of compulsory



Photo: Monica Warden

heterosexuality. In light of recent studies of lesbian sexual behavior—many of which indicate that dykes are rather likely to have sex with men—some commentators have begun to question whether “lesbian identity” accurately describes lesbian desire and sexual practice. Add to that the building bi political movement, the recent publication of Marjorie Garber’s best-selling *Vice Versa: Bisexuality and the Eroticism of Everyday Life*, a spate of celebrity disclosures, and *Newsweek*’s 1995 cover story, “Bisexuality: A New Identity Emerges,” and it’s no wonder pop-culture critics say we’re living in a “bisexual moment.”

If we are, though, nobody told the lesbians. For Rainbow, hers may be a case of a bisexual subsumed within the larger lesbian community. And no wonder. As so often happens when women who date men date women, the lesbian community at best views them as budding or closeted lesbians. At worst, they’re confused, disease-ridden, pro-

miscuous fence-sitters, as the September, 1995 issue of the Los Angeles-based *Lesbian News* doesn’t hesitate to tell us:

The consensus of women who have commented to “The Ear” [*Lesbian News*’ gossip column] is that bisexuality is okay, but that they ought to get their own movement, and take their transgendered buddies with them...I don’t care who you sleep with, but what about HIV? Are you having safe sex with your bisexual or straight men? Are they having safe sex when you’re not around? Are you unwittingly bringing HIV into the lesbian community?

Yet it’s the very boundaries of the lesbian community that the new bisexual politics are throwing into question. It’s true that, as the *Lesbian News* puts it, “[Lesbians] have spent 25 years building a civil-rights movement and have paid a significant price for it.” But when a recent study of 900 women, conducted by Lani Ka’ahumanu, reports that “22% of [self-identified]

lesbians...have had sex with men in the last three years,” and two studies of lesbians conducted from 1978 through 1989 found that between 74% and 81% had engaged at some point in heterosexual intercourse, the *Lesbian News*’ unified, safe-and-secure “lesbian community” begins to look like one big bisexual closet.

Moreover, it appears that many bisexual women are eager conspirators in this suppression of bisexuality. As the gay movement grows, it becomes easier to keep under wraps the dirty little secret that many gay women enjoy sex with men. To the naked eye, a female couple registers as a lesbian couple. And with so many bi women passing for gay, it’s easier for both parties—lesbian and bisexual—to leave a heterosexual past behind.

Lisa Cotto* [*All names marked with asterisks are pseudonyms.*] is a prime example. At 26, the recently divorced mother was happily married to her husband for five years. Looking back to

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that time she says, "I think that if he didn't want the divorce, I perhaps would have still been with him. When he said he wanted a divorce, I was completely devastated." On the rebound, however, Lisa had "the most incredible experience of my life" when she found herself involved with a woman. So incredible, Lisa decided never to go back to men again. When asked to identify herself, Lisa is emphatic. "I'm gay for sure."

Yolanda Anaya, a 27-year-old Mexican single mom, also considers herself gay. Although she grew up playing "house" with her girlfriends—"Of course, I was the tomboy, so I played the 'man' role, the 'father' role"—it did not stop her from dating the boy next door. From then on, bisexuality marked her adolescence. "I can now look back and consider myself bisexual at that time, because I would kiss girls, and I would kiss boys."

Yolanda's desire to be with women ultimately proved more important to her than her bisexual tendencies. Despite the eleven years she spent with her childhood sweetheart—who is also the father of her daughter—Yolanda has found a way to mitigate the straight side of her past. "I don't see myself with a man anymore. I know I don't want to be with a man."

For Lisa, Yolanda, and many other women, it's been easy to leave a heterosexual past behind, especially if the alternative means calling oneself bisexual. Rainbow sums it up this way: "People will say to me, you've been in love with a guy, so how can you go with a woman now? They'll say this is just a phase. I say no! I just met Lily, liked her, and wanted to be with her." Rainbow rejects the label bisexual "because the term makes people think you are confused and don't know what you want." But if it is not a phase and not lesbianism and not bisexuality, what is it?

Whitney Charles*, a 35-year-young black divorcee, puts it this way. "I'm attracted to the spirit that lives within men and women. I don't say bisexual because I decided not to label myself. I just say sexual being." Jeanette Agate, a 31-year-old Italian Catholic agrees, to an extent, "Sexuality is fluid. Sex is very fluid. It's hard to give one particular definition." Though she is equally attracted to men and women, "Right now

I say that I am a bisexual-identified lesbian, [though it seems like] it's too many labels."

Women like Whitney and Jeanette may be pioneers in new territories of sexual identity. But they seem also to be running from some bisexual pariah factor. Whether bisexual women "pass" informally as gay, refuse to label themselves, or opt for label overload, the source may be the same: an industrial-strength bisexual closet. But how can we blame these women when the lesbian community—even their lesbian lovers—reinforce this closet daily? "I just don't think you can like two sexes," says Maria Puentes, whose lover is Alana Roman, a twenty-something bisexual. So what does Maria think of Alana? "I don't consider her bisexual when she's with me." Rainbow's lover Lily would agree. "I think whoever you're with at the time defines you."

In order to gain acceptance from both the straight and gay communities, many bisexuals vehemently battle the they'll-fuck-anything-that-movesstereotype. Others are trying to fine-tune it. Jeanette, for example, actively practices nonmonogamy, as does her primary partner, another bisexual woman who is currently also involved with a man. "I'm not saying that anything goes in our relationship," says the longtime activist. "But it is negotiable." Emily Anderson*, an African-American, married mother of three, makes no pretense of combating bi stereotypes. She and her husband Brock* have an open marriage. They regularly invite third parties, usually other women, into the relationship. Emily, who drives most of the extramarital affairs, says she's fortunate to have a partner like hers. "Brock is a very unusual man." In Brock's words, "I'm not an insecure person. Therefore I'm comfortable with Emily trying to find out who she is."

Couple Brock's supportiveness with lesbian biphobia, and it is no wonder that a self-assured bisexual like Emily does not even think about involvement in the lesbian community. She has, in fact, never even been involved with an avowed lesbian. "All my lovers are straight to start with," she deadpans. "This is just not even an issue."

To some gay women, Emily and Jeanette are their worst nightmares: bisexual women who regularly practice nonmonogamy, group sex with men,

and sexual intercourse with people of both sexes within the same span of time. And no wonder. Hardly a dyke exists who hasn't repelled a drunken advance from a straight couple in a bar, or from a bi woman "looking for a third." No lesbian, moreover, likes being cast as a "non-threatening" addition to a marital dyad. Many might say to Emily, "Fine, we don't want you in our community."

Yet, some bisexual theorists are arguing that lesbians are woefully unaware of the historical connections between bisexuals—even the sort we call "swingers," usually with a note of disdain—and gay politics and culture. Studies such as Garber's *Vice Versa* explore how bisexual women—from Virginia Woolf and her Bloomsbury crowd to Ma Rainey and the Harlem Renaissance—were deeply involved in the genesis of lesbian culture and politics. Garber also tracks the connections during the 1960s and 1970s between the sexual-liberation movement and the nascent gay rights movement. (In response, bisexual activists have been quick to point out that gay historians have ungratefully recast these historical figures and trends as homosexual.) Further irony lies in the Catch-22 that modern, visible bisexuals (like Jeanette) are often caught in as they experience the tension between their commitment to sexual freedom and the negative connotations of the "swinger" stereotype. This is no easy task. In any case, according to the new bi movement, it's not just today's lesbian community that functions as a bisexual closet; it may be the whole of lesbian and gay history itself.

One cultural corner where the bisexual closet seems to be opening its door—for better or worse—is Hollywood. Bisexuals have different takes on Madonna, Drew Barrymore, and the rise of bi chic in the entertainment industry. "Celebrities are always on TV and always in the tabloids," worries Alana. "And people read the tabloids, so they see the stereotypes and think that every bisexual is like that." Mimi Stauber, the 24-year-old chair of a bi women's support group in Chicago, articulates the thought further. "If someone is really bi in a responsible way and they want to be an activist or give money to causes, then that's terrific. But if they just want to go on David Letterman and say,

'Yeah, I like girls and guys, isn't that cool?' then no. It doesn't do much good if they are just doing it for shock value. In fact that is detrimental to people who are really dealing with their sexual orientation."

Yet some bisexual spokespeople are pointing out how performing artists—from Greta Garbo to David Bowie—have not only finessed the bisexual closet, but integrated their sexuality into their celebrity appeal. "All great stars are bisexual in the performative mode," writes Garber, citing the example of Marlene Dietrich. Said the great crossdresser once:

You could say that my act is divided between the woman's part and the man's part. The woman's part is for the men and the man's part is for the women. It gives tremendous variety to the act.

Woody Allen's famous *bon mot* ("Say what you like about bisexuality, it doubles your chances for a date on Saturday night") takes on new meaning in the case of Hollywood. Throughout the history of entertainment, suggests Garber, a bisexual performer's ability to become an erotic focus for both men and women doubles his or her potential market.

Back in the grassroots, more and more bisexuals are struggling with the "mundane" issues of acceptance and safe spaces. Why is it, they ask, that many lesbians persecute bisexual women, some of whose activist credentials are as solid as any? "I have a very, very strong need to be with women—and I don't just mean physically," Mimi asserts. "Just to be with women, to have women's space, to have emotional connections with women, and to talk about bisexual and lesbian issues is important to me. I go to meetings. I volunteer. As long as I'm doing that stuff I feel involved."

So why does a phenomenon that seems so pervasive and so innocuous elicit such heated debate among lesbians? In this day and age, where being out is in, it's actually quite bizarre that self-identified bisexual women often find their biggest challenges within lesbian circles. Perhaps this is because bisexuality is viewed as a temporary sexuality or transitional orientation. Perhaps it is because bisexuality, in Garber's formulation, "undoes sexual

Continued on page 49

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Post-Urban, Post-Industrial but never Post-Elite

a short excursion through contemporary urban theory

Edward Castleton

O

*"How are ye blind, ye treaders-down
of cities!"*

*-The Trojan Women but in the spirit of
John Horne Burns*

In current mainstream political discourse the longstanding urban crisis is being mined once again for corporate profit, this time with the help of business theorists promoting new cyber-angles on the old techniques for looting what little wealth remains in non-corporate, non-elite hands. Edward Castleton's "Post-Urban, Post-Industrial but never Post-Elite" describes the future envisaged by these corporate ideologists in which, as usual, the aspirations and struggles of both workers and unemployed remain largely invisible. This essay has been reprinted from issue #7 of *The Baffler*, an excellent independent magazine of literature, criticism and commentary. Subscriptions are \$16/4 issues from *The Baffler*, POB 378293, Chicago, IL 60637.

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nce, a long time ago, there was an analog world, goes the contemporary bromide of the new cyber-elite. Now, they enthuse, the world has transformed itself into a "place without space," where time zones are more important than trade zones, and where an address on-line is a thousand times more significant than any petty street coordinate. Busying themselves with faxes, voice-mail, e-mail, and the Internet, this new class couldn't care less about where they physically happen to be. Geography and community must come to them. "Being digital" is the crucial thing, insists Nicholas Negroponte, MIT media lab guru and high priest of the new corporate age: every remnant of the analog world must bend to meet his needs or be abandoned. There is, for example, no difference between Sunday and Monday in Negroponte's workweek. Work follows him everywhere and he follows it, jacking in with his laptop wherever he happens to be. As for those topographic mundanities which would imply that something exists outside the solipsistic self, forget it. The digital world has freed this entrepreneurial narcissus from the surly bonds of place, class, and context—and also, if we are to believe the bom-

bast, from the grip of those nasty relics of the past known as cities.

This should have been obvious to anyone who read the February, 1995 special ASAP edition of *Forbes*. The magazine's cover story is a face-off over "the city vs. the country" featuring the apostle of entrepreneurial overcoming, Tom Peters, and George Gilder, author of the futuristic *Microcosm: the Quantum Revolution in Economics and Technology*. Gilder is all pessimism, predicting "the death of cities" due to the dread inevitability of Gordon Moore's (you know, the founder of Intel) Law, which asserts that because the number of transistors on a chip double every 18 months and because capital now depreciates in real value faster than ever before, there is an organic centrifuge—a "constant pressure distributing intelligence to the fringes of all networks"—out there somewhere that is breaking down all concentrations of power. The law does not seem to apply to the relationship between management and labor, but Gilder freely speculates about its consequences for the physical conglomeration of the me-

California, the site of the illustrious Silicon Valley. Here we can experience "the ascendancy and relevance of the new city-state," a veritable Renaissance Italy of "clusters of exuberant variety" where entrepreneurship and progress arise from the interaction between innovative high-tech Indians and Vietnamese, a tribute to the vitality of American pluralism as well as to the competitive milieu that blurs all the boundaries in the heat of "the passion to one-up the other guy." Needless to say, Peters adds, San Francisco and San Jose are not separate cities anyway; they form an enormous "zesty network" ("the 50,000 person city is history"), the product of a successful merger, a sort of cosmopolitan joint venture.

According to Peters, human interaction will triumph over Gilder's vision of a domesticated techno-utopia. Yet the sort of human interaction he has in mind is not entirely clear. In a characteristic fit of amphetamine-fed bombast coupled with his usual millenarian opacity, this consultant's consultant blurts out,

"Big cities are left-over baggage from the industrial era," [Gilder] insists, "dirty, dangerous, and pestilential" places that only survive on a \$360 billion life-support system courtesy of government subsidies. But with the coming of the information revolution this ultimate concentration of power can be painlessly amputated while all its advantages are retained and delivered safely and cleanly through the glories of ever-expanding bandwidth.

tropolis. "Big cities are left-over baggage from the industrial era," he insists, "dirty, dangerous, and pestilential" places that only survive on a \$360 billion life-support system courtesy of government subsidies. But with the coming of the information revolution this ultimate concentration of power can be painlessly amputated while all its advantages are retained and delivered safely and cleanly through the glories of ever-expanding bandwidth. The levelling of the distinctiveness of different cultural activities will bring a "culture of first choices" where you can watch operas at the Met or order books on the computer from Borders without having to move your lazy ass.

Peters, though, is all WASPish exuberance, the optimistic counterpoint in a rigged rendezvous. At first, his argument seems surprising: the city is "the perfect market" and thus the site of perfect competition. The accumulation of capital has never undermined the growth of the urban metropolis, he points out. In fact, the occurrence of the one has historically been concomitant with the development of the other. Strangely, though, the proof to which Peters points is not a city in any traditional sense; it's Santa Clara County in

As far as I am concerned, the greatest thing in the world would be the dispersion of the suburb. You should either be in places where there are two people per square mile or places where there are two million per square mile. I have a great deal of difficulty imagining a vibrant society with no opera companies and no ballet companies, no Cafe Veronas in Palo Alto, and I doubt whether we can have a cyberspatial Cafe Verona with the sweat dripping all over the machines.

Never mind imagining *arriviste* Peters as an enthusiast of such generic emblems of high culture as either opera or ballet—what's really revealing is his choice of Palo Alto as the desirable "vibrant society"—Palo Alto, the seat of Stanford University and its Hoover Institute, a sterile, affluent shopping mall community that even forced its eastern, more Hispanic half (the half that cleans the toilets and does the gardening) to secede and form East Palo Alto.

For those who didn't get the message of the Gilder/Peters pseudo-debate, another hint of the post-urban future came in the next feature story, "Tele-City on a Hill" written by Peter



Collage: Johann Humyn Being

Huber of the always progressive Manhattan Institute. Warning any New York readers who aren't yet panic-stricken that *Omaha*, "the 800 Number Capital of the World," threatens to transform Gotham into just another "fly-over community" with its cheap labor, taxes, and real estate, Huber insists that the only hope for urban sprawl is to re-organize itself and interactively export its "intellectual capital" via "long-distance antennas and transcontinental glass, switches, routes and multiplexes, the eyes and ears of the electronic age." By "intellectual capital" Huber and his fellow urban theorists don't mean the editorial staff of the *New York Review of Books*. *Business Week's* tale of urban cyber-rejuvenation focuses on Manhattan's new "Silicon Alley" where venture capitalists can get turned on by "the most diverse pool of intellectual capital anywhere" in the form of new "edutainment" and CD ROM game "industries."

The virtual city

At the behest of Gingrich's think tank, the Progress and Freedom Foundation (PFF), Gilder recently co-authored with fellow futurists Alvin Toffler, Esther Dyson, and George Keyworth "Cyberspace and the American Dream: A Magna Carta for the Knowledge Age," an alarming little pamphlet that encapsulates all the pseudo-emancipatory and anti-urban fantasies of the new corporate right. See, the "Third Wave" economy, whose central resource is "actionable knowledge" (e.g. "data, information, images, symbols, culture, ideology, and values"), has replaced the "static competition" of the Machine Age with "dynamic competition," "demassification," and more quality (albeit expensive) customized goods. The "Third Wave" has also millennialized the way we understand geography. Now we are to witness "the creation of 'electronic

neighborhoods' bound together not by geography but by shared interests" as "Third Wave policies permit people to work at home, and to live wherever they choose"—unless, of course, backwards-looking Second Wave policies interfere and encourage urbanization.

Michael Vlahos, one of the PFF's leading thinkers, predicts that by the year 2020 we will inhabit a glorious realm he calls "Byte-City," ruled over by "Brain Lords" like Microsoft's Bill Gates, followed consecutively in the suburban hierarchy by "Upper Service" workers (lawyers), "Industrial" workers, and then the "Lost" people "who can't cope" and must do menial jobs. Old understandings of the metropolis give way to a city

Free Willy II. It's "Silicon Alley"/multimedia gulch redux. The heroes of their story are the props makers at tiny firms with names like Cinnabar and the independent contractors who make customized xenon lights for the cinematic trashmen that rule the town. These bold but minuscule innovators, brilliantly solving problems for the big producers, hail from a different race altogether than the more vulgar and resentful Second Wave type that occasionally blow up federal buildings or computer scientists. As Jonathan Katz, the founder of Cinnabar, warmly reminisces about his first job in an uncreative unionized Hollywood, "I remember one producer saying to me, 'What is a nice Jewish boy like you doing making

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that is nothing more than "a node in the network of our lives." At a recent conference entitled "Democracy in Virtual," Vlahos presented a vision of the cyber-future in which everyone serves one another from their living rooms and the GOP dream of a meritocratic utopia has finally been achieved. "All job worth must be proven in Byte City," Vlahos boasts, insisting that the "Brain Lords," those "kinder, gentler robber barons" of tomorrow, will not constitute a "heritable class," heaven forbid, but "will make it as individuals." Old-style cities brought *anomie* and caused a "loss of identity" amidst the tyranny of mass production and mass consumption. But in the next century, every home will possess a "virtu-screen" that "doesn't take us to the city, It brings the city to us. The city is in our living room, or wherever we want it to be." "There is no interface," Vlahos cryptically proclaims, for, due to the wonders of the much touted "computer-mediated communications" technologies, "You will not hit the pavement of Byte City streets, but you will walk the sidewalks none the less."

Not that the obsequious Democrats have an alternative vision to offer while trying desperately to catch up with the Right. Announcing their findings in *Business Week*, the same platform as the Republicans, Joel Kotkin of the Democratic Leadership Council and David Friedman, *LA Times* contributor, outlined their vision of the urban future in an article entitled "Why Every Business will be like Show Business." The future, they proclaim, is to be found in Hollywood, which they portray as a place where small, non-union companies that compare themselves to "medieval craftsmen" form "loose networks" around collaborative "projects," all to produce masterpieces of high-tech American stupidity like

props? I'm used to rednecks in overalls.'" And so, because of "intelligent" freelancers like Katz, a ship scene from *Free Willy II* can thankfully be shot at an outdoor pool next to the LA Coliseum: the "here-today-gone-tomorrow production strategy" is manifest destiny in this age of productive chaos.

Philistines Kotkin and Friedman are not that much different from the boys at Newt's PFF: both are interested primarily in the bigger profit margins that can only come from incessant technological innovation. Countries like France that resist the importation of Hollywood product just don't understand: "France's real problem is not so much American 'cultural imperialism' as its inability to compete with Hollywood's combination of technical and artistic specialization and well-oiled collaboration." They don't comprehend the new force of the pluralist "cosmopolis" which is supplanting the anachronistic monocultural model of the nation-state that Fascism, Stalinism, and Third World Liberation movements created. The new urban network-society accordingly thrives in an atmosphere of decentralized "diversity" where the agglomeration of different "tribes" like Jews, Chinese, Indians, and gays boost the "knowledge value" of corporate assets through high-tech miscegenation. *Vive la différence!*

Downsizing corporate offices

Apart from the fact that Kotkin's capitalist-multicultural babble is being uttered by a Democrat, his narrative of a CD ROM future is nearly identical to the one given by Vlahos and the other starry-eyed pseudo-intellectuals at the PFF. But regardless of whether the new order is cultural or organic,

urban or suburban, or even whether the half-baked metatheory comes from the right or the center, the rhetoric of necessity, it seems, must be invoked. Byte City or no Byte City, the important fact is that the rule of the post-analog business theorists who make up the new power elite be legitimated.

Beneath all of the Information Elite for technological transformation lies the simple need to increase profit margins. Take the following nibble, tossed out on April 3, 1995 in a *Financial Times* article entitled "The incredible shrinking office." Britannic Tower, the second tallest office building in London, is empty; British Petroleum's HQ had

New strategies for looting the cities

As for our existing cities, without their accumulated "intellectual capital" they are only dens of "welfare cheats" and other such riff-raff, places where New Age freak Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington and Texas journalism professor Marvin Olasky can go cruising the ghetto on anthropological culture runs while looking for charitable organizations to practice "effective compassion" with the funds of their newly-founded PFF (Progress and Freedom Foundation) affiliate, "Center for Human Compassion." Olasky, a virtual nobody until the GOP's 17% "mandate" in November, 1994, has

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decided to halve its administration and move away from expensive management structures by cutting down on office space. Société Générale in Paris was doing the same too, moving to the ugly La Défense business district outside the city proper, to reduce its consumption of office space. Downsizing has apparently taken on a new more spatial form that spells the death knell, if we haven't already heard it, of the Organization Man and his Affluent Society of downtown offices. Urban-based corporations now recognize that it is time to move to the suburbs and experiment with such techniques as "hot-desking" (where employees don't have a fixed office space but vacillate from free desk to free desk) or, even better for cutting down on overhead, working at home. In the same vein, *Business Week* asserted in April, 1995 that the celebrated pool of 8.4 million telecommuters, which grows daily courtesy of videoconferencing, digital network phone lines, and high-speed "integrated" (another trendy corporate neologism) services, allows companies to boost productivity and save from \$6,000 to \$12,000 a year per employee working at home.

The new system, though, suffers from the usual problem: disciplining your tele-employees. His or her domestic office or corporatized home (take your pick) must be "child-proofed" and he/she needs to "set boundaries." If that wasn't enough, *Business Week* includes the following bit of advice: "Dress in a particular way when you are working, though you need not put on a suit and tie or heels." The message of the piece was short, succinct, and concerned. Remember "home is home. work is work," always "maintain that distinction," and stuff your work space with "comfortable, ergonomic furniture."

suddenly been elevated to model citizen of tomorrow's utopia—he's white, an educated "symbolic analyst" who coaches baseball, tutors children, and, perhaps for the sake of moral holism, adopted a black child. Insisting, as he does in *The Tragedy of American Compassion*, that neighborliness has calamitous consequences, that a sort of suburban-parental philosophy of tough love is the best stance for policy-makers, has brought him generous recognition: Olasky now gets invited to \$50,000 a plate dinners with Huffington and company.

But Newt himself phrased the new vision of the city best during a televised speech. On the one hand, the city is dangerous and horrible: "as a father of two daughters, I can't ignore the terror and worry of parents in our inner-cities must feel for their children...Within a half-mile of this Capitol, your Capitol, drugs, violence and despair threaten the lives of our citizens." On the other hand, the solution is empty block grants for those marginalized by the Third Wave while we commute across the new "borderless" world from our safe suburbs in Maryland and Virginia. And what could be a better place for a test-run of the cyber-civics than Washington D.C.: a penal colony for the descendants of slaves run by inept overseers amid Mussolinian architecture and precious boutiques for the precious bourgeois commuters to preciously idiotic Georgetown. Unable to govern itself, deregulated *avant la lettre*, and faced with a \$722 million budget shortfall and junk bond status, the Capital is today run by an independent finance board which delights in lowering property taxes and voiding the union contracts of those lazy, surly, "pensioned to the hilt" city workers that live on the wrong side of the Anacostia.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

GIVEN THAT POVERTY SEEMS UNLIKELY TO MAGICALLY **VANISH** ANYTIME SOON, THE LOGIC BEHIND WELFARE "REFORM" STRIKES US AS A BIT **FLAWED**--EVEN FROM A STRICTLY **BOTTOM-LINE** PERSPECTIVE...

HMM...I SUPPOSE A LARGE UNDERCLASS OF DESPERATE, ANGRY PEOPLE WHO CAN'T FIND WORK AND HAVE NOWHERE TO TURN... **COULD BE CAUSE FOR CONCERN...**

AW, SCREW 'EM! I WANT A **TAX CUT!**



UNFORTUNATELY, MANY AMERICANS SEEM PRIMARILY--EVEN **OBSESSIVELY**--CONCERNED BY THE THOUGHT THAT SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE, MAY BE **ABUSING** THE SYSTEM.

THEY'RE OUT THERE--AND THEY'RE GETTING BENEFITS THEY DON'T **DESERVE!** I JUST **KNOW IT!**

HAROLD, GO TO SLEEP.



IN FACT, THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT WENT SO FAR AS TO SPEND FIVE MILLION DOLLARS ON A COMPUTERIZED TRACKING SYSTEM DESIGNED TO **FERRET OUT** THIS SUPPOSED LEGION OF WELFARE **CHEATS...**

HEY, THAT'S **GREAT!** I'M SICK AND TIRED OF ALL THOSE **LAZY BUMS--**

--BLEEDING **HONEST** TAXPAYERS **DRY--**



AFTER TWO YEARS, THEY UNCOVERED EXACTLY **SIX INSTANCES** OF FRAUD.

--OH.

LET'S SEE--THAT WOULD BE ABOUT **\$833,333 PER CASE...**

I'M SORRY--WHO DID YOU SAY WAS BLEEDING US **DRY..?**



But for other Third Wave thinkers, the inner city is just the place for the capitalism of the future to flourish. Certainly, it is the only part of the metropolis the business press and the mainstream press are willing to talk about, albeit with the paternalistic benevolence of a mint julep. Before the advent of the Republican rollback, the inner city could be conveniently branded as an autonomous ecosystem all of its own. Blatant geographical disparities in wealth could be dismissed as part of a larger, natural social order. But with the "end of history" the memory of urban political struggles can be tossed along with the welfare state, and the problem of urban poverty can be handed over to the mercantile experts in profitability. The vultures are poised and ready to go. Take the case of Michael (*Competitive Advantages of Nation*) Porter, who argued in the May-June, 1995 issue of the *Harvard Business Review* that poverty might have its own "competitive advantage." We need to "rethink" the inner city "in economic rather than social terms," to "create" rather than "redistribute" wealth. Condescending and "artificial" forms of urban social investment like government preference programs and mandates do not lead to greater economic

activity. That, as the familiar argument has it, derive from "private, for-private initiatives and investment based on economic self-interest." The creation of low-quality, less-than-full-time jobs with few benefits that is so attractive to retailers and service-sector companies has a future of its own, Porter insists. Then there are the advantages of the size of the inner city market for the consumption of cheap goods: "even though average inner city incomes are relatively low, high population density translates into an immense market with substantial purchasing power." The promise of such a situation has already given rise to a number of success stories, which Porter ticks off one by one: media companies like Black Entertainment Television, various hair care products, then the repugnant story of Detroit's Universal Casket, which had \$3 million in sales by specifically targeting black-owned funeral homes. "Export-led growth" comes through the recognition that "the tastes and sensibilities of inner city communities are cutting-edge in a number of respects and often become mainstream," meaning the production of commodified deviance for the kids in the suburbs.

What Porter wants is (oddly, given his explicitly anti-statist

TOM TOMORROW 2-5-97

agenda) what every salesman of the future wants—more corporate welfare. Do away with the “legacy of big city politics and entrenched bureaucracies,” such annoyances as “punitive” liability laws, “restrictive” zoning, blasphemous architectural codes, permits and inspections, OSHA compliance, and government-enforced union contracts. Silence those annoying community activists who “unrealistically” expect

The point is to ignore politics altogether in anodyne waves of profitable forgetfulness. Moreover, if Vlahos’ predictions of a rising cyber-elite are correct, soon The GOP’s starry-eyed cohorts won’t even have to appear physically in the nation’s capital—politics will simply be the product of telecommuting “Brain Lords.” It might be time to buy some ergonomically-correct furniture for your new home-office.

Before the advent of the Republican rollback, the inner city could be conveniently branded as an autonomous ecosystem all of its own. Blatant geographical disparities in wealth could be dismissed as part of a larger, natural social order. But with the “end of history” the memory of urban political struggles can be tossed along with the welfare state, and the problem of urban poverty can be handed over to the mercantile experts in profitability.

business to meet social needs. Eliminate the capital gains taxes that punish dividends from long-term equity investments. Subsidize the corporate way of life with low-interest tax-exempt revenue bond loans, tax credits for more R & D, and corporate income tax exemptions. Reduce government to providing services for businesses and not citizens. Hand out subsidies without any anti-relocation caveats, but allowing for the sort of flexibility necessary to transfer jobs and bust unions. Eliminate “clawback”-style tax-abatement demands that subsidies do more than gratuitously feed the pockets of CEOs, force companies to adequately invest in urban communities, increase wages and benefits, and enforce environmental regulation.

So confident are today’s business elites in the lack of opposition to their cushy government doles that they even talk about a mythical “tax burden” under which they suffer, arguing that higher government spending on programs like Medicaid and child welfare for inner city residents leads to nefariously higher corporate taxes. Forget the fact, as Greg Leroy has brilliantly pointed out in a recent *Dollars and Sense* article, that the real “tax burden” is created by corporate tax exemptions. Forget the disastrous consequences of GOP fiscal strategies for “InfoCities” like New York that depend for economic “growth” on such bogus industries as financial consulting and insurance. And forget the telling anecdote of Howard Jarvis’s and Robert Citron’s Orange County, whose \$1.7 billion in losses was directly the result of a limited tax base and too much faith in Alan Greenspan’s interest rate goodwill.

Wait—is that kind of civic blunder Second or Third Wave? The question is moot if we take this sort of corporate blather seriously: tales of corporate misdeeds do not have enough virtuality to survive the shift into the high-tech tomorrow.



Excavating the Instant Ruin

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By willfully mis-reading the Instant Ruin as something more than spiffy kitsch, we are asking the ersatz part to stand in for the whole, but there is, in the end, no whole for which to stand. In proper Post Modern fashion, artifact has been carefully excised from context. The current set of MTV News is a mock early '60s newsroom, complete with buttonboard partitions, low slung typeface, and government issue wall clock. The image borrows heavily from the famous clip of a teary Walter Cronkite announcing JFK’s death. Today the scene is in color and anchorman Kurt Loder doesn’t exactly choke up when telling us about Ms. Love’s latest brawl. Just before every commercial break, the camera pulls back to show us that the set is really, surprise, just a set. We glimpse artfully arranged lighting scaffolds, cables taped to the floor, perhaps a bored camera operator. Even the VJ’s stop mugging for a few seconds.

MTV meets the Instant Ruin on its own terms, offering us thin candor for thin news. It’s a cheeky, cynical approach, located somewhere between the hipster’s lunch box and the challenge of pulling off projects like Gas Works Park. It’s fun to imitate the past. It’s another thing to make it work.



MARK ©89
NEVILLE

Kill the Car No More Roads!

Fifth Estate

W

hen eager crowds pushed through the turnstiles of Detroit's North American International Auto Show during a recent Winter, they had the look of fans at a championship game or dreamy-eyed kids thinking of presents under the Christmas tree. Although all of them must have been aware, at some level of consciousness, of the carnage, property damage, and pollution these icons of fantasy and desire create, they were there to ooh and ahh the futuristic concept cars and the latest models.

1996 was the centenary of Henry Ford's first automobile, and Detroit, the so-called Motor City (even though only one percent of auto production currently occurs here), has seen a spate of official celebrations sponsored by car companies and the auto union. Michigan even issued special commemorative license plates.

Smash the Wall

The story has it that on June 4, 1896, young Hank discovered that his first car was too big to make it through the doors of the workshop where he had built it. Taking up a sledgehammer, he smashed out the wall around the door to provide an opening large enough for the vehicle. Since that time, the automobile has been doing more or less the same thing to the planet's ecosphere.

The car very rapidly became the central artifact of the individualistic subjectivity of modern industrial capitalist civilization. When they purchase a car, people aren't simply obtaining needed transportation, but pseudo-identity, and the illusion of freedom. Too bad if this fetish

"Kill the Car—No More Roads" is a simple summary of the devastating effects wrought by 100 years of automotive madness on society and the natural world, along with a call for the progressive abandonment of car culture and its ever-enlarging, cancerous infrastructure of roadways, automotive plants and petrochemical suppliers. **Fifth Estate** is an anti-technology, anti-civilization, anarcho-primitivist quarterly now in its 31st year of publication. This essay has been reprinted from the Fall, 1996 issue of **Fifth Estate**. Subscriptions are \$6 for four issues (\$8 foreign) from **Fifth Estate**, 4632 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48201.

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brings about unprecedented catastrophe for the life web of the planet—forests, waters, soils, the atmosphere—and for the half a million people currently killed globally every year in motor vehicle accidents, one third of them children. Motorized vehicles have also revolutionized war, making possible far greater panoplies of mass destruction.

As Jan Lundberg, editor of *Auto Free Times* (magazine of the Alliance for a Paving Moratorium), notes, "We live in an *autocracy*. Future generations, the biggest victims, will be incredulous over our Dark Age. But both Clinton and Dole, as well as your friendly corporate news media, promised more jobs through cars—and cars through jobs."

According to Lundberg, "The so-called love affair with the car may be real for the would-be cowboy or phallic-driving greedball, but really it's a case of lack of choice. Just look at the polls of motorists indicating they want more public transit. Or consider the criminal conspiracy that General Motors hatched with two oil companies, a tire and a truck company to destroy 85 American cities' rail trolley systems earlier this century so we could get buses, pavement and freeways instead." One can, of course, "choose" not to own a car in many cities, as Lundberg, who lives in pedestrian-friendly Arcata, California, has done. But in a lot of places, for example, Detroit, there is no real choice. Like landless peasants eating the seeds for next year's crop, people have been driven to drive to survive, and driving, undermines their long term survival.

The Endless Thirst for Oil

Not only is the modern driver little more than a variety of drudge engaged in a mindless (mostly unpaid) labor ("Drive to work, work to drive," goes the saying), petroleum is the requisite, foundational resource fuel for industrial capitalism. Lundberg believes oil will run out in the near future, but we are

not convinced. Corporations continue to announce the discovery of potentially vast reserves in unlikely places all over the planet (Greenland, Southeast Asia, etc.). The fact is that some definitive, fossil fuel-generated ecocide will likely come long before the wells run dry.

Little or nothing is being done about the rapidly approaching cataclysm,

The car and car culture are integral to nearly every destructive pathology in modern capitalism. The more miles of road are built, the more all the interrelated, exponentially expanding ecological and social crises are manifest, from the mass extinction of species to atmospheric collapse. Not only oil wars and massive oil and chemical spills, but every ongoing, undramatic disaster can be linked to them....

either because of the inevitable consequences of an ongoing production-consumption economy, or because of the logical consequences of a possible depletion-collapse. Instead, even after the horrors of the Persian Gulf War, denial remains the name of the game, with some thirty million new cars produced each year looking for buyers. And nothing, not even the last remnants of relatively pristine wilderness, be it Ecuadorian rainforest or arctic tundra, is immune from this fever. The command may come from above, but it is supported by the thoroughly conditioned below: keep drilling. It doesn't seem to matter, for example, that corporations could drain the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and get at best 400 days of gasoline for the U.S. fleet of 150 million cars.

Oil Wars and Chemical Spills

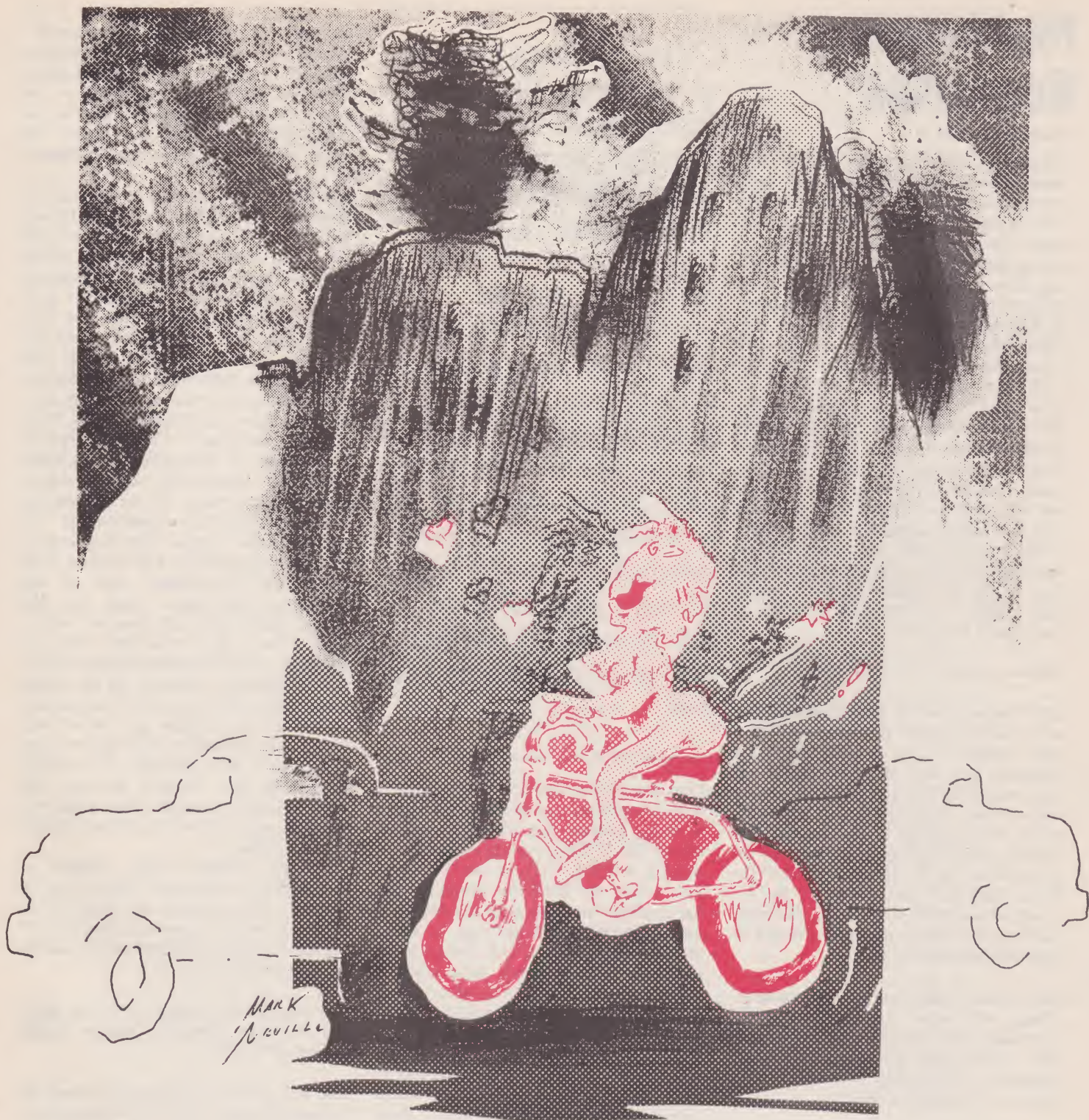
The car and car culture are integral to nearly every destructive pathology in modern capitalism. The more miles of road are built, the more all the interrelated, exponentially expanding ecological and social crises are manifest, from the mass extinction of species to atmo-

spheric collapse. Not only oil wars and massive oil and chemical spills, but every ongoing, undramatic disaster can be linked to them, among them a million or so animals killed every day by cars, the wantonly negligent abuse of land, the destruction of forests and farmlands, the oppressive alienation of exurban, car-generated pseudo-villages of strangers, a banal and empty personhood based on speeding from one blank, degraded place to another. Also, worsening air pollution and diminished human health: every car produced leaves fifty barrels of toxic wastes in the process of production, and that doesn't count the car itself, which is also a toxic product.

Car Production is Suicide

To mention just one other health effect, each year the Big Three automakers use more than ten tons of mercury—one of the most deadly substances released into the environment by industrial production—for "convenience light" switches in cars. This is not an example of people destroying themselves to meet what might be thought their immediate, basic needs—for example, using petroleum in agriculture and basic transport of food and the like (at least until some other more reasonable forms of sustainable lifeways can emerge)—but for the most trivial kind of conditioned comfort. It is a madness that must eventually take the world's elites and their proletarians down together into oblivion—not through the mutual destruction of contending classes as Marx once put it, but through mutual suicide through class collaboration to create a fundamentally pathological and unsustainable society.

Here in Detroit, one thinks of a particularly repulsive display in the latest Labor Day parade down Woodward Avenue. There, auto workers waved from a motorized float draped in American flags and showcasing a red Ford Mustang (provided by the company). The fast car, usually seen barreling alone through some stunningly beautiful



desert at sunset—an image familiar to anyone who has ever seen a commercial for the automobile, is every mass man's (and every mass woman's) most pyrrhic psychic-sexual power fantasy. But the paved over cities of the future, contaminated and uninhabitable from what Henry Ford's inventions have done do

to them, are the real, far less beautiful, life-less landscape awaiting us.

As Ivan Illich argues, social and ecological conversion demand economic and industrial inversion. People are going to have to find better ways to spend their time than making and driving cars. Let us reiterate our desire to

rid ourselves, once and for all, of the most representative creation of capitalism and everything that is most foul, imbecilic and corrupt about it, as well as most thoroughly destructive of the possibilities for genuine ecological and social harmony. Down with Car Culture! Kill the Car!

Nightmare Scenarios

Continued from page 21

FRAPH—were U.S. employees. The U.S. wielded tremendous influence over them. It's clear—and this is something I've been looking into, interviewing officials from the coup regime—that if the U.S. had sent a strong, unified signal that it wanted them out, they would have left. The U.S. never did that, though. It blustered a lot publicly. It did incomplete sanctions, although massive oil shipments through Texaco and other firms were allowed to continue. The U.S. could have removed them, but that's not what the U.S. wanted. The nightmare scenario for Washington was the coup regime people leaving without a U.S. occupation force on the ground to manage the aftermath. Because if the coup regime people had left, there would have been something akin to a popular uprising in Haiti. Aristide would have returned, but he would have returned unfettered. He could have gone back to the old popular program—maybe even a bolder and more radical version of the popular program.

DP: *Just what the U.S. didn't want....*

AN: That was the last thing first Bush and then Clinton wanted; that was their nightmare scenario. It was basically the U.S.'s insistence that when the coup regime left there would be U.S. troops on the ground there to take over—and that is what happened. Now Aristide at first resisted that scenario—he didn't want U.S. troops on the ground—just as he had first resisted the World Bank/IMF plan. But as he saw the slaughter continuing he finally decided, well, they've got a gun to my head; I've got to give them what they want.

DP: *I'd like to talk about your interesting exchange with former Assistant Secretary of State Elliot Abrams on the Charlie Rose TV show. I think a great deal was revealed in that encounter. First, for those who didn't see it, what was the exchange about?*

AN: I got the chance to appear on this national TV show with Abrams, and suggested to his face that he should be tried by a Nuremberg-style tribunal for his role in backing the atrocities in Guatemala, having served as an accomplice to those atrocities, and that he should be tried along with the Democrats who supported that policy as well. Abrams essentially responded: That's ridiculous—you'd have to try the entire leadership of the U.S. government in the

"I got the chance to appear on this national TV show with [former Assistant Secretary of State Elliot] Abrams, and suggested to his face that he should be tried by a Nuremberg-style tribunal for his role in backing the atrocities in Guatemala, having served as an accomplice to those atrocities, and that he should be tried along with the Democrats who supported that policy as well. Abrams essentially responded: That's ridiculous—you'd have to try the entire leadership of the U.S. government in the Cold War period. And he's basically right."

Cold War period. And he's basically right. I think his emphasis on the Cold War aspect is wrong, because that was really just an excuse. The U.S. was backing these kinds of policies in Latin America and elsewhere even before the Bolshevik revolution, and has continued to do so since the demise of the Soviet Union. But he's right in saying that the broad sweep of U.S. foreign policy leadership is implicated in these kinds of atrocities. And if the U.S. were serious about international law it would agree to these kinds of trials. President Bush said Saddam Hussein should be tried in this way—I think it's a good idea, I support it. The U.S. is now supporting war crimes tribunals for Bosnia and Rwanda—I think that's a good idea. But you've got to be consistent. You have to be willing to do the same for El Salvador and Guatemala and Haiti and East Timor—cases where the U.S. officials have been senior partners in crime, where, in a legal sense, they've been accomplices to crimes against humanity.

DP: *The angle we tend to get from the mainstream media is a focus on a few "rotten apples" getting out of control within an other-*

wise unproblematic framework. So if it turns out that CIA officials directly engineered a number of murders in Central America, whoops! Let's find the corrupt individuals who were individually responsible for the excess. The solution is always to weed out the rotten apples, while the rotten barrel rolls ahead, remains unquestioned, unchallenged.

AN: Right. Elliot Abrams, in this sense, is really the quintessential bad apple. He was unusually open and blunt—never with full directness—but he often verged on stating, matter-of-factly, U.S. reasons for supporting terror overseas. U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick was the same way. But even though they were more outspoken, and they may have been a little more extreme than some of their Republican and Democratic counterparts, they were implementing mainstream policies. As Abrams correctly points out, the Democrats in Congress supported the Contras in Nicaragua; they quibbled about the tactics—they wanted various restrictions, to restrict the aid to "humanitarian" aid, but they supported the U.S. backing of the Contras. The Democrats in Congress supported the U.S. backing of the Guatemalan army-regime and of the Salvadoran army-regime. Again, they had tactical differences in all cases, but when it came down to the bottom line—Were you willing to let the Salvadoran regime fall, yes or no? Were you willing to let the Guatemalan regime fall, yes or no? Were you willing to let the Contras go out of existence?—the Democrats in Congress always sided with the position of Abrams, Kirkpatrick and Reagan, because they weren't willing to make those statements which decency and law would have required them to make.

So the problem wasn't Abrams or Kirkpatrick as individuals. They're not the problem. The problem is the overall policy, which has been a bipartisan policy of backing terror regimes and terror outfits like the Contras and the FRAPH.

DP: *And this has continued since the departure of Abrams, Kirkpatrick and the Reagan foreign policy team....*

AN: Yes. The U.S. is continuing to back the Guatemalan army. The CIA is continuing to employ FRAPH people in Haiti; the U.S. Green Berets and military, in their occupation of the Haitian countryside, adopted a policy which allowed the FRAPH to keep their arms. The U.S. is continuing to arm the Indonesian army. Clinton is now offering them a batch of F-16s; his administration has approved more than 300 different arms shipments—those are just the commercial arms shipments—to the Suharto regime in Indonesia. So, yes, the slaughters indeed

continue.

DP: *Speaking of the Suharto regime in Indonesia, you were in East Timor and personally experienced one of the atrocities you're talking about. Could you provide some historical context—what role did the U.S. play in Indonesia and what kind of regime are we talking about?*

AN: General Suharto, the current dictator of Indonesia, came to power in a military coup 1965-1967. He overthrew Sukarno, the founding President of Indonesia, who was a nationalist. The U.S. was delighted with this coup. Suharto consolidated his coup with a bloodbath in Indonesia that killed anywhere from 400,000 to a million people, including much of the grassroots base of the Indonesian Communist party, many ethnic Chinese, anyone who was seen as an opponent of the Army. The CIA provided lists of names of dissidents, who were killed by the Indonesian army during these slaughters. Suharto has been a loyal client of the U.S. ever since. In 1975 Suharto invaded the small neighboring country of East Timor, with U.S. backing. Timor is 1/200 the size of Indonesia. It had been a Portuguese colony, but it was moving toward independence in 1975. Suharto thought this would set a bad example for Indonesia: the idea of freedom as a precedent. So he asked U.S. permission to invade. He got it. President Ford and Henry Kissinger personally gave the go-ahead in a meeting in Jakarta [Indonesia's capitol]. And the Indonesian occupation army, which has been in Timor ever since, has killed a third of the population—the greatest proportional genocide since the Nazis.

DP: *In 1991 you went to East Timor to write about the situation there. Can you describe what took place?*

AN: I went for *The New Yorker* magazine. I survived a massacre that took place in Dili, the capitol city. There was a procession from the main Catholic church to the cemetery, a religious procession which became a protest. It was to commemorate the death of a young man who had been killed by the army. As the crowd of about 5,000 people stood outside the Santa Cruz cemetery, hemmed in by the walls, the Indonesian army walked up in formation wielding American M-16s. I went and stood between the soldiers and the crowd (I was there along with Amy Goodman of Pacifica radio). I thought we could prevent a massacre just with our presence. That didn't work. The soldiers swept right past us. They raised their rifles. They opened fire on the crowd. Gunned people down. The street was running with blood. They took our cameras and

"President Bush said Saddam Hussein should be tried in this way—I think it's a good idea, I support it. The U.S. is now supporting war crimes tribunals for Bosnia and Rwanda—I think that's a good idea. But you've got to be consistent. You have to be willing to do the same for El Salvador and Guatemala and Haiti and East Timor—cases where the U.S. officials have been senior partners in crime, where, in a legal sense, they've been accomplices to crimes against humanity."

tape recorders. They beat us, fractured my skull with the butts of their M-16s. The soldiers put us on the ground. It seemed they were deciding whether to execute us. They had the rifles to our heads. When we finally convinced them we were from the United States, though, they took the rifles away from our heads, because I think they realized there might be a price to pay politically.

DP: *How did you convince them that you were from the United States?*

AN: We yelled "America, America," and although another soldier had taken my passport, Amy still had hers, so that convinced them. We were from the same country their weapons were from. We were able to escape from the scene and report the massacre to the outside world, but they killed at least 271 Timorese, and hundreds of others in the following days killed or wounded. General Sutrisno, the national armed forces commander of Indonesia, said "such people must be shot, and we will shoot them." He was later promoted to vice-President....

DP: *You were able to publish an op-ed piece in The New York Times that appeared the day Clinton met with Suharto in Washington. What were you hoping to accomplish with that piece?*

AN: I said that Clinton should tell Suharto that the U.S. had now changed its position on Timor, was no longer backing the occupation, and that he should tell Suharto to get out of Timor. I said that if Clinton did that, this would be the beginning of the end for the occupation. Clinton, however, did not take that advice. Instead, when Suharto came into the oval office, Clinton was there with Al Gore, Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown—and they welcomed him with open arms. A senior official from the White House told *The New York Times*, Suharto—he's our kind of guy. An outrage. But it is the case that the U.S. policy toward Indonesia is now in contest, because there's a national grassroots movement that's grown up in the wake of the Dili massacre. The East Timor Action Network (ETAN) has had a tremendous impact. They've won significant victories in blocking military training aid, in winning a ban on small arms sales to Indonesia, in blocking a shipment of F-5 fighter planes. So there's a battle going on in Washington. It used to be that the U.S. just 100% backed Suharto. That's no longer the case; it's in contest now. People who want to stop this outrage should contact ETAN. Their national number is (914) 428-7299. Their address is the East Timor Action Network, P.O. Box 1182, White Plains, NY 10602.

DP: *Why is it that the kind of information you've been providing here is largely, if not totally, unavailable through the mainstream media? Most people who get their news from the nightly broadcasts or from the daily newspapers simply won't discover these things.*

AN: The big corporate press—the network news, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, the main news outlets—they let Washington set their agenda. And so if the President isn't talking about East Timor day after day, they're not gonna report it day after day. And unless something gets reported day after day, it doesn't sink in; people don't remember it. That's completely apart from the accuracy of the reporting. The reporting is often inaccurate and skewed with a deep political bias in favor of the powers that be in Washington. This is because the news outlets are owned by rich people, by corporations who have the same basic economic and political interests, the same worldview, as the Pentagon, the State Department, Disney and Reebok. It's a community of interests. Their news outlets don't undermine those interests by reporting inconvenient facts. However, the way things work in the States you are *allowed* to put this information out, and people can reach each other with the information (it's a little more difficult to get

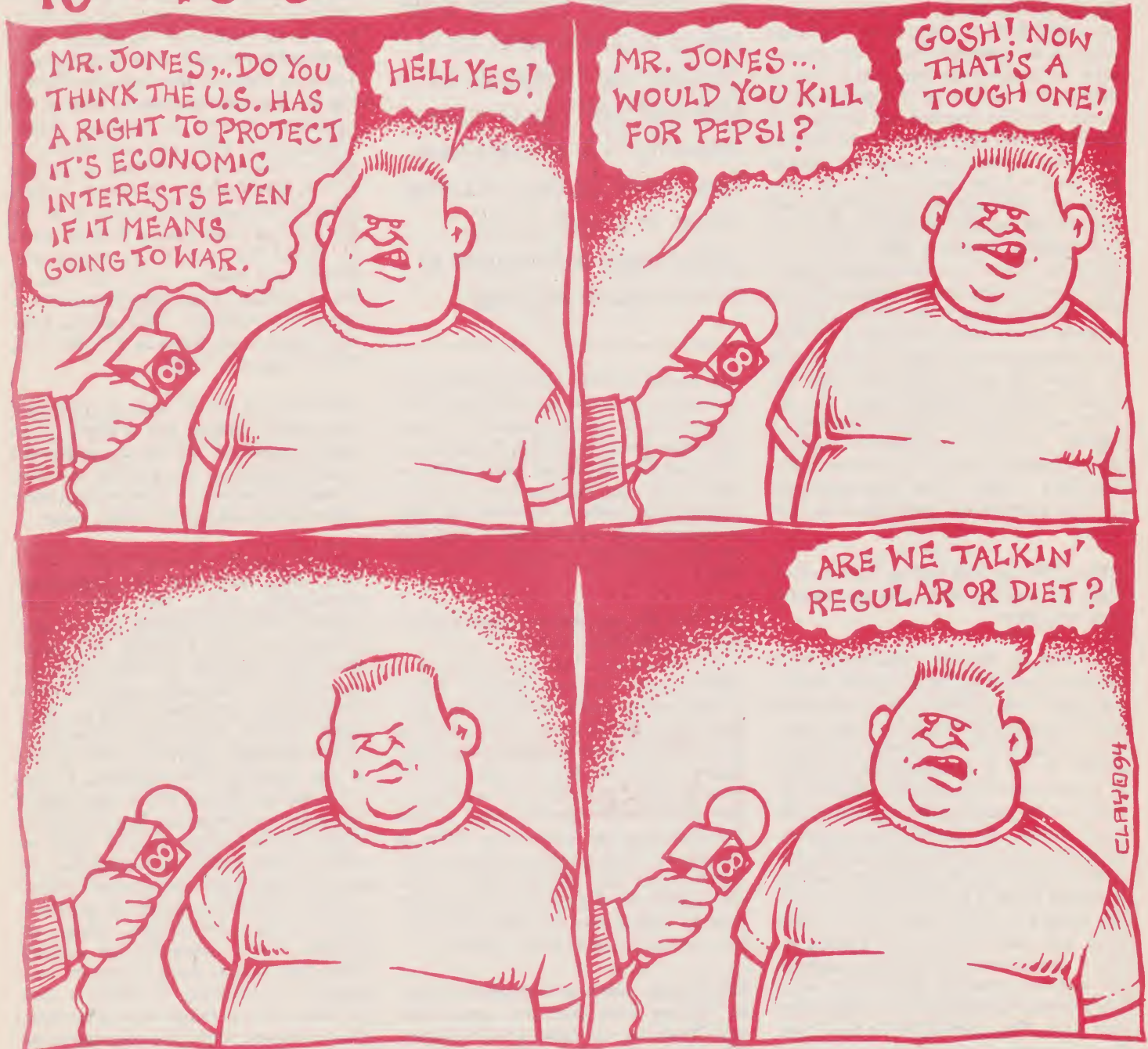
access to the big media outlets). Through discussions like this one, through community radio, through face-to-face meetings, through organizing, we can start to build networks of people. The example of ETAN is a good example of how that can work. The political victories that ETAN has won in Washington have all occurred below the horizon of the radar of the national media; none of them have been reported in the major press, with tiny exceptions. Yet just through organizing, through building up

networks of a few thousand people and targeting their energies with phone calls on key committees at key moments, it's proven to be a success. We need to keep trying to break through, to the extent that local groups can, into the big media. But *more* importantly, we need to be developing alternative media outlets, and, I think even *more* fundamentally, organizing. More and more people involved in organizing on issues like Timor and Guatemala and Haiti. And you don't *need* to be covered by the

New York Times in order to strike a political blow; you don't need to be on the *CBS Evening News* to wage a battle and to win it. It helps tremendously when you can do that, but it's not a prerequisite.

Danny Postel hosts *Free Associations* (7644 N Greenview #2A, Chicago, IL 60626), a weekly radio show in Chicago, for which this interview was conducted. His work has appeared in *In These Times*, *New Politics*, *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, as well as two Chicago newspapers, *New City* and *La Raza*.

"IS THIS GONNA BE ON THE TEST?"



Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1994 Clay Butler

Letters

continued from page 9

Xers are grasping what little freedom there is left in this land that dares to call itself America, but whose Congress continues to attack the Constitution and fundamentals which make a free society.

Maybe Nancy Reagan's hyped up "Just Say No" propaganda and lies about the dangers of drugs became transparent to today's youth when they discovered that most drugs aren't as dangerous as they were told. Then finding themselves unable to separate the facts from the bull in commercials about drugs, they probably chose to believe none of it.

United States Citizen
Joseph Neal Whittington III
Beltsville, MD

Left/right dichotomy?

Dear Mr. McQuinn,

...I must congratulate you on publishing Adam Parfrey's insightful piece, "Finding Our Way Out of Oklahoma" (Winter 1996). Parfrey appears to be one of several journalists (others are, for example, Daniel Brandt and Ace Hayes) who are questioning the methodological validity of the left-right dichotomy.

I am a librarian, not a journalist, but my reading of American politics leads me to the same conclusion. How about printing some of Mr. Hayes' research on Chip Berlet's mysterious motives and linkages? Perhaps you could publish it with a rebuttal to the charges from Berlet and some of the other folks at South End Press?

Sincerely,
Adam Chandler
Luling, LA

Zen of noise

Dear Mr. McQuinn,

C.A.L. Press is the voice that I would want to have speaking to me from the intuitive. It is the response that I would give the mindless depersonalization I feel at times. But, when I rationalize why this is, I have to wonder as to my intent.

My own lack of perspective is the limiting factor. This perspective lacks what I find to be essential. I have never understood why the values I am representing, in my existence, are so valueless. My perspective is one of safety, security, individual integrity, worth, change, etc. We all are contradictions. And the message of "universal homogeneity" is disturbing.

When I suppose there are multiple existences, those that represent a different direction in intent, then I am left without my values. To question, to deny, to usurp

the power of the creative, these things make one responsive. We all respond to the loudest noise. The zen of the noise is to respond to the quietest noise within...in my estimation.

I think of what will be the truth, when the truth has truly died. That is sooner, more immediate, more possible, the worst outcome of our culture. Our culture seeks to reject that upon which it is founded. We are consumer creatures, we do not want to reject our desires naturally. If we did, people that represent the opposite would not have their appeal. Would I choose to be mad, or homeless, or whatever the society defiles? I think not. No one can rationally choose the outcomes of their choices. My choices involve the involuntary. I do not reach the point of completion, acquisition, integration, result, success, because those very things are transient. When can one ever hope to attain these, without giving all to the search? The cause of this in the culture is that there is no end. We live on in our legacy, or we are of no consequence. What is our legacy? I am afraid to ask.

The people who have made a difference in my life...that would be impossible to know. You would qualify except that what you represent is dangerous. The truth is dangerous. Keep up the good work.

John S. Howze
El Paso, TX



The Bisexual Closet

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orientation as a category [and] reveals sexuality to be a process of growth, transformation, and surprise, not a stable and knowable state of being."

If so, no wonder lesbians are so nervous. What makes the lesbian movement strong is the formation of a collective identity, unified behind sexual orientation as a category. If bisexuality "undoes" that, it kicks the lesbian

movement where it really hurts: in the heart and soul of "identity politics." For its part, the mainstream hasn't shown itself too willing to accept the generality—or, if you buy Freud, the universality—of bisexual desire. As Lillian Faderman asks in the *Advocate*, "Will [heterosexuals] acknowledge that sexuality is flexible and fluid? Will they admit their own bisexual potential?"

In the meantime, across the country bi women are networking, gaining visibility, and publishing new testimonies, histories, and theories of bisexuality. Jeanette feels optimistic. "Ten years from now, when bisexuals are on their way like lesbians and gays are, it won't be such a frightening thing," she predicts. "I think the bi thing is coming."

Expletive Deleted!

continued from page 26

have a good day and fuck off."

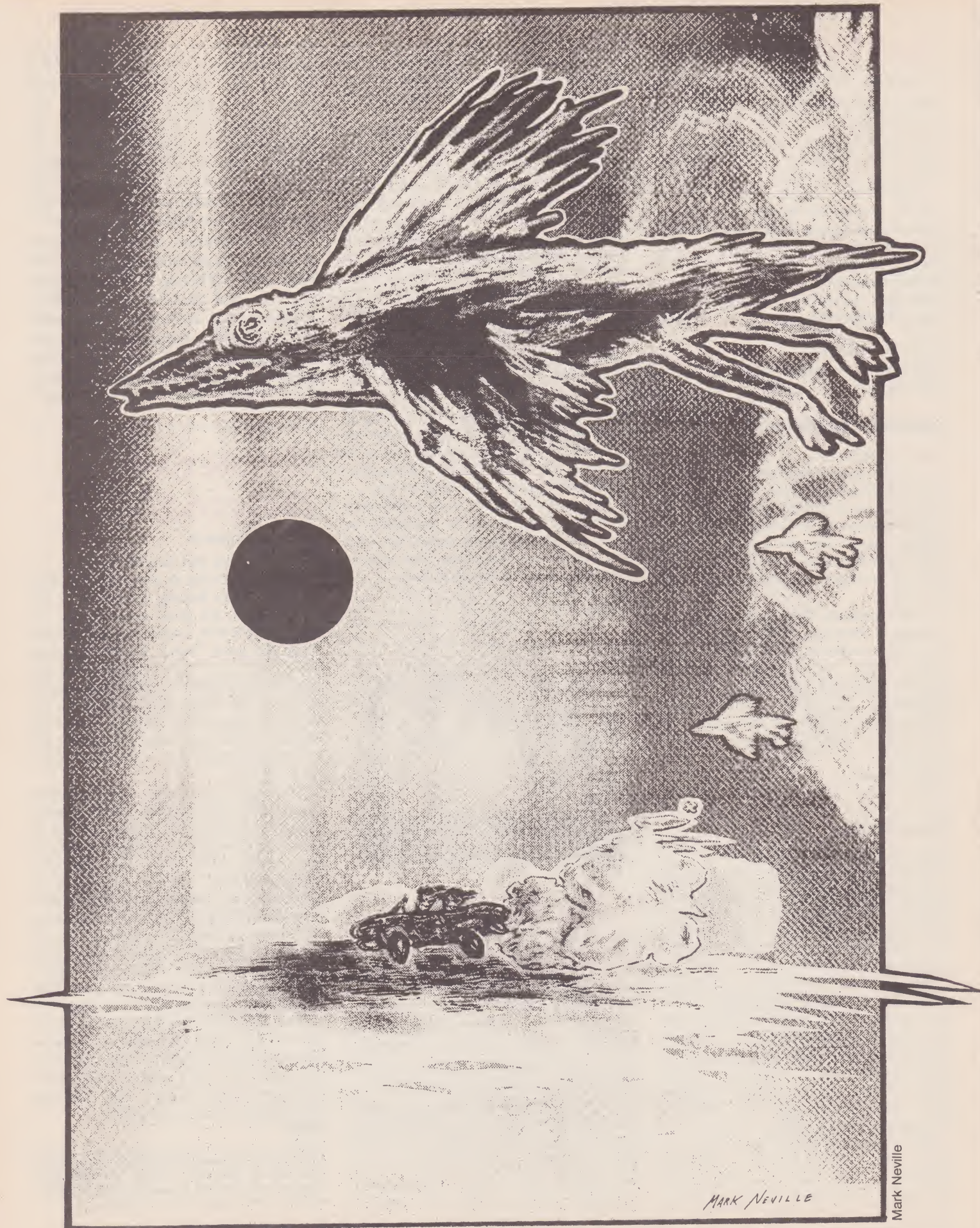
OK, so what's this all about anyway? Well it's about a few fucking things dear to my fucking heart. It's about people telling me I'm a low-life slob, a terrible writer because I use the word "fuck." It's about people telling me I'm not verbal enough to express myself in any other way. Most importantly, it's about me telling them to fuck off because the boring elitist reams of fucked up, fucking terrible excrement that passes for writing these days is like a holocaust visited upon my brain.

You know what I like? I like beautiful women with filthy mouths. "Fuck" comes rolling out of those pursed lips and I'm in love. I like listening to strangers scream at each other—"Fuck You" says the one. "Fuck you, too," says the other. I'm in heaven! I'm at a baseball game. Phanavision is showing people in the crowd on the huge scoreboard. Suddenly, there he is, there's my hero, a guy with a big smile on his face giving the rest of the stadium the finger. Everyone groans. I clap my hands and give him a standing ovation. Fuckin' 'A' right on!

Now, the only thing that worries me is that the word "fuck" becomes so commonplace that the clean-fingered types appropriate it. Fear not. We'll come up with something even more obscene, more damning and irritating to the fucking snobs.

•Keffo

This article first appeared in *Temp Slave* #9, available from Keffo at POB 8284, Madison, WI 83708-8284 (sample copies \$3 cash; subscriptions \$8/3 issues). Reprinted with permission. No copyright.



Mark Neville

Alternative Press Magazines

Alternative
Press
Magazines
& Zines

Because there is such a huge volume of alternative material being published, in any single issue we are only able to review a hundred or so of the periodicals we receive. Zines and magazines go in and out of publication daily, so don't be surprised if a few of those listed here have already folded. You're almost always better off sending cash (or IRCs—international Postal Reply Coupons) for smaller zines, unless the review specifies otherwise.

APR will send a free exchange copy to every publication reviewed in these pages (as long as they are at least 16 pages in length and standard size). Please be aware that we receive hundreds of periodicals and are constantly backlogged. Also keep in mind that the APR issue we send for exchanges will be the one a publication is reviewed in (when it is reviewed), so please be patient. APR does not exchange with non-English language publications. All reviews in this issue are by Jason McQuinn unless noted [TW] for Tom Wheeler or [MZ] for Mickey Z.

Apologies for the fact that some of these reviews are getting awfully old. This is primarily due to the long time since the last issue of this magazine appeared. The next issue will be much more up-to-date. With the older reviews you might want to check with the publishers to make sure they're still coming out before sending your cash.

ALADDIN'S WINDOW

#13/undated (J.R. Molloy, POB 333, Palo Cedro, CA 96073) is a 76-page, photocopied zine, subtitled "The Vision of Awakened Men," whose main focus seems to be opposition to feminism of the "man-hating" variety from a variety of perspectives, though tending more to the right than to the left. This issue features a very lengthy and extremely well-written and very chilling piece titled "Falling on the Deaf Ear: The Growing False Accusations of Rape Crisis in the U.S. and How to Stop It" by James Anderson, who is, unsurprisingly, a prison inmate convicted of a rape he (fairly convincingly) claims never happened. At the very least, reading this zine reveals an undercurrent of articulate resentment and reaction to feminism which usually remains invisible. Subscriptions are now \$29.95/year; sample copies are \$8.

BAD ATTITUDE

#8/Autumn-Winter '95 (121 Railton Road, London SE24 0LR, U.K.) is an energetic, 24-page "Radical Women's Newspaper" in an oversized tabloid magazine format, featuring international news an opinion from an anti-porn, leftist-feminist perspective. Issue #8 includes a brief history of the (now quarter-century-old) U.S. women's news journals *Off Our Backs* by Angela Johnson, an interview with Vi Subversa (formerly of the anarcho-punk band Poison Girls), and an interview with Tracy

Chandler (one of the authors of *Lesbians Talk Violent Relationships*) on abusive lesbian relationships in the U.K. Every issue always includes pages and pages of short women's news updates from around the world. Check this out! Subscriptions are £10/6 issues (IMO/checks in Sterling only).

THE BAFFLER

#7/undated (POB 378293, Chicago, IL 60637) is billed as "The Journal the Blunts the Cutting Edge!" and it's fast becoming one of my all-time favorite "literary journals," with its brilliantly critical coverage of pop/business/consumer culture, along with the "alternative" art and music scenes. This excellent issue on "The City in the Age of Information" features Edward Castleton's "Post-Urban, Post-Industrial but never Post-Elite," Tom Vanderbilt's "Revolt of the Nice," and Thomas Frank's homage to Kansas City, "A Machine for Forgetting." Past numbers have already sold out, so send these folks \$5 immediately for a sample copy, or better yet \$16 for a 4-issue subscription.

BLACK SHEETS

#10/undated (POB 31155, San Francisco, CA 94131-0155) is a slick-covered 52-page sex/humor zine with a queer/bisex twist. This is by no means for everyone. This issue's theme is "Bestiality & Glamour!" It includes Carol Queen on "Talking with Animals" (and more), Denise Noe on "Koko's Crushes" (Koko the gorilla, that is), and Bill Andriette's thoughtful comments on "Laying with Beasts." Sample copies are \$6.00 (\$7 outside US); subscriptions are \$20/4 issues. Age statement required.

THE BODY POLITIC

Vol.6, #10/Oct. thru Vol.7, #1/Jan.'97 (POB 2363, Binghamton, NY. 13902) is an informative 36-page "Monthly pro-choice news report," including a "Legislative Watch" in each issue. The October issue includes a piece by Patricia Windle on "The Terrorist Tutorials," describing four of the handbooks for harassment and destruction of abortion clinics that are currently being distributed. Single copies are \$3; subscriptions are \$18/year.

BUST

#8/Fall-Winter '96 (POB 319 Ansonia Station, New York, NY 10023) has grown to a 128-page magazine since my last review. This remains one of the best girl-zines around. This is the motherhood issue, featuring sections on "Motherhood, Yes!" and "Motherhood, No!" as well as "Motherhood, Maybe." No p.c. feminism or guilt-ridden self-denial rules here. These are real women with something more than the latest beauty tips to get off their chests. *Bust* is a must. Subscriptions are a bargain at \$14/year.

BYPASS

#7/undated (c/o Slab-O-Concrete, POB 148, Hove, BN3 3DQ, UK; or Slab-O-Concrete, POB 82138-8162, Dallas, TX 75382, USA) is a 44-page British alternative to *Factsheet Five*, with a cover tag-line proclaiming it's "The Direct Line to the World of Zines." This fairly small, but attractive review magazine has a plethora of readable zine and mag reviews by a fairly large group of contributors, which keeps it more interesting to my mind. The only down

note is the excessive angst shown by Sue de Nim in her review of the latest issue of the gay & boy-love magazine *Gayme*. If you live in the U.K. there's no excuse for missing this. In North America it's certainly good for a somewhat different perspective on the zine scene. Sample copies are \$4.00 or £1.80; subscriptions are \$12 or £5 for 3 issues.

CINEASTE

Vol.XXII, #2/undated (200 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10009-8917) is a long-running, slick and attractive, 64-page publication billed as "America's leading magazine on the art and politics of the cinema." This issue features several interviews (including one with Jim Jarmusch, director of *Dead Man*), contributions to an ongoing series on "Race in Contemporary American Cinema," along with pages and pages of current film, home video and book reviews. Subscriptions are now \$18/4 issues.

COUNTRY CONNECTIONS

Vol.2, #3/Oct. & #4/Dec.'96 (POB 6748, Pine Mountain, CA 93222-6748) is a now a competently-produced, 48-page bimonthly magazine aimed primarily at country-dwellers in California and elsewhere, with a continuing emphasis on ethical liberalism, feel-good stories and lifestyle issues. The October issue urges voting for third parties as a "radical" alternative. The December issue features an interview on "Co-op America and the Greening of American Business." Subscriptions are \$22/year.

COVERT ACTION QUARTERLY

#59/Winter '96-97 (1500 Massachusetts Ave. NW #732, Washington, DC. 20005) is an essential magazine covering the hidden political and economic machinations which maintain US hegemony behind the scenes around the world—every issue containing important revelations. This issue's cover story is "The New Age of Surveillance," featuring Nicky Hager's "Exposing the Global Surveillance System," Wayne Madsen documenting "The Battle for Cyberspace," and Mark Dunlea's "The Poverty Profiteers Privatize Welfare." You don't know what the real score is or how the US government actually operates if you don't read this magazine. Subscriptions are well worth the \$22/year.

DISCUSSION BULLETIN

#79/Sept.-Oct.'96 thru #81/Jan.-Feb.'97 (POB 1564, Grand Rapids, MI. 49501) is a 32-page assortment of letters and reprinted articles primarily from the anti-market, non-statist radical milieu. These issues include several evaluations of Noam Chomsky's "anarchism," mostly critical of his positions. Subscriptions are \$3/year (6 issues).

EXTRA!

Vol.9, #1/Jan.-Feb. thru #6/Nov.-Dec.'96 (POB 911, Pearl River, NY 10965) is the 28-page bimonthly magazine of FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting), a national media watch group seeking "to correct bias and imbalance," published from a liberal perspective. The Jan.-Feb. issue features Allen Hunter's interesting "Why the Right Hates the Media: Conservatives and the 'New Class,'" and Karl Grossman's analysis of the recent and unnecessary death of *New York Newsday*. The Nov.-Dec. issue in-

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cludes extensive coverage of the (highly limited) treatment of "welfare reform" in the media, amongst many other stories. Highly recommended. Subscriptions are now \$19/year (including the bimonthly newsletter, **EXTRA! Update**).

EXTRAPHILE #6/Summer '95 (POB 5585, Arlington, VA. 22205) is an interesting 64-page, photocopied "Quarterly Journal of the 1st Extranational" (a "union of egos" consisting of Len Bracken and Bob Black). This issue focuses on the theme of "No Nations, No Work" with a whole slew of quality essays and reprints, including Bob Black's restrained "American Labor History: The Quest for Synthesis," Simone Weil on "Factory Work," Len Bracken's assessment of Fredy Perlman's classic pamphlet on *The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism*, and a new (re-edited) version of the old prostitutionist "Revolutionary Self-Theory" introduction. Just about everything included deserves digestion and further comment. This zine continues to be a genuine pleasure to page through. Subscriptions are \$3/copy (checks payable to Bracken).

FACTSHEET 5

#60/undated (Seth Friedman, POB 170099, San Francisco, CA. 94117-0099) is back again bigger than ever! This self-described "big fat guide to the zine revolution," is now up to 160 pages crammed with over 2,000 marginal & alternative press zine, book and comic reviews. This issue also includes a rant criticizing zine quality by Dan Kelly and Jeff Koyen, and a little zine scene gossip. You haven't seen a copy of this mag yet? Well, what are you waiting for? Samples are \$6; subscriptions are well-worth \$20/6 issues.

FIFTH ESTATE

#348/Fall '96 (4632 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48201) is a 32-page anti-civilization, anarcho-primitivist tabloid, consistently publishing some of the most intelligent writing in the radical milieu. This issue covers the protests at the recent Chicago Democratic Party convention, and includes a thoughtful piece by T. Fulano on "The Unabomber & the Future of Industrial Society," as well as excerpts from David Watson's new book *Beyond Bookchin: Preface for a Future Social Ecology*. Always highly recommended. Subscriptions are now \$8.00/4 issues.

FREEDOM

Anarchist Fortnightly

Vol.57, #18/Sept. 21 '96 thru Vol.58, #2/Jan. 25 '97 (84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, England) is a long-running 8-page tabloid of anarchist news and comment, primarily focussing on all things British, but also taking on international social struggles as well. The most recent issue covers the anti-election campaign, which was unfortunately unsuccessful in preventing the election of a new Labor government. Subscriptions are £18.00/year (24 issues).

FREE INQUIRY

Vol.15, #3/Summer '95 thru Vol.16, #4/Fall '96 (Box 664, Buffalo, NY 14226-0664) is a professionally-produced 68-page quarterly magazine published by the Council for Democratic and

Secular Humanism. The Summer '95 issue features an editorial from the chairman of CODESH announcing his "Agenda for the Humanist Movement in the 21st Century" (which, with its glorification of science and technology coupled with a concomitant ignorance of their alienating and enslaving uses under corporate capitalism reminds me once again of why I would never consider myself to be a humanist!). It also includes some touching personal stories from the WWII era by Paul Pfalzner, George & Eva Klein, Vera Freud, and Kurt Baier, as well as some short pieces on the uses and functions of fantasy by Timothy Madigan, Molleen Matsumura, Charles Faulkner, David Berman, and Kenneth Marsalek. The Winter '95-96 issue features discussions of "tolerance" by several humanist writers, all of whom seem to agree (ignoring mountains of evidence) that "tolerance" can only exist in a liberal humanist society! The Fall '96 issue focusses on defining humanism. Despite its absurdities, this is an improving magazine which may well help drag secular humanism from out of its presently rather boring slumber. Subscriptions are \$25/year.

FUNNY PAGES

#60/undated (POB 317025, Dayton, OH. 45437) is a 12-page zine of occasionally funny, but just as often completely tasteless, humor aimed at celebrities, politicians, Christians, gender, race, gays, etc., now in an 8 1/2 x 11 format. Those with a sick sense of humor will love this zine; others will have second thoughts. Mild example: "Jesus, hanging on the cross, raises his eyes toward the heavens and cries, 'Father Almighty, please remove these nails from my hands...WAIT, NO! THE FEET, THE FEET!!'" Subscriptions are \$15/10 issues.

GIRL FRIENDS

Vol.3, #2/March-April '96 thru Vol.4, #1/Jan.-Feb.'97 (POB 713, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019) is a slick & colorful, but advertising-laden "Magazine of Lesbian Enjoyment" brought out by former *On Our Backs* staffers. Most notably, this 48-page bimonthly features an outspoken advice column by Pat Califia (author of the important new book *Public Sex*) and some unabashedly sexual photography in every issue. The March-April edition also includes Califia's important article on three recent "Crimes Against Gender," and the May-June issue features Monica Warden and Kennette Crockett's overdue investigation of the shifting lines between lesbian and bisexual identities in "The Bisexual Closet," while the July-August issue introduces a design makeover (which leaves out the traditional centerfolds now reserved for subscribers only). Single copies are \$4.95; subscriptions are \$24.

GLOBAL MAIL

#15/Sept.-Dec.'96 (POB 597996, Chicago, IL. 60659) is now a 32-page zine consisting of extensive small-print listings of mail-art shows, archives, computer bulletin boards, projects, zines, etc. This is must reading for people looking for contacts with a wide variety of interests in a variety of places, although I've always found the format to be very un-reader-friendly. With this issue Michael Dittman announces that he is

taking over publication from Ashley Parker Owens. Subscriptions are \$9/year (3 issue).

HEAD

#7/undated (BM Uplift, London WC1N 3XX, England) is an incredibly packed, unpaginated zine with a huge amount of information, reprints of subversive posters, calls to action, visionary comics, etc., from "unemployed heads who don't want to waste our lives in a dead end system." A lot more zines could use this level of quality in their signal to noise ratios. This one is "The Sex Issue," and it's loaded with information, tips and titillations like Jack Morin's "10 Rules of Anal Sex," an interview with Collin Brown on Body Electric—his school for erotic massage, a story of love without contracts titled "Love in the Boudoir," a quick interview with Hakim Bey, Steve Wilson's "Sexual Mysticism in Theory and Practice," and much, much more. See for yourself while they're still available. Sample copies are \$10 or £3.50 cash (postpaid).

IN THESE TIMES

Vol.20, #22/Sept. 16, '96 thru Feb.3, '97 (Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647) is a professionally-produced, fortnightly "alternative newsmagazine" providing an ongoing left-liberal perspective on major national and international news stories in a uniquely timely manner—impossible for periodicals appearing less frequently. The February 3rd issue covers the Progressive Caucus' questionable challenge to the Democratic Party Subscriptions are \$34.95/year (26 issues), or \$18.95/6 months.

LIBERTY

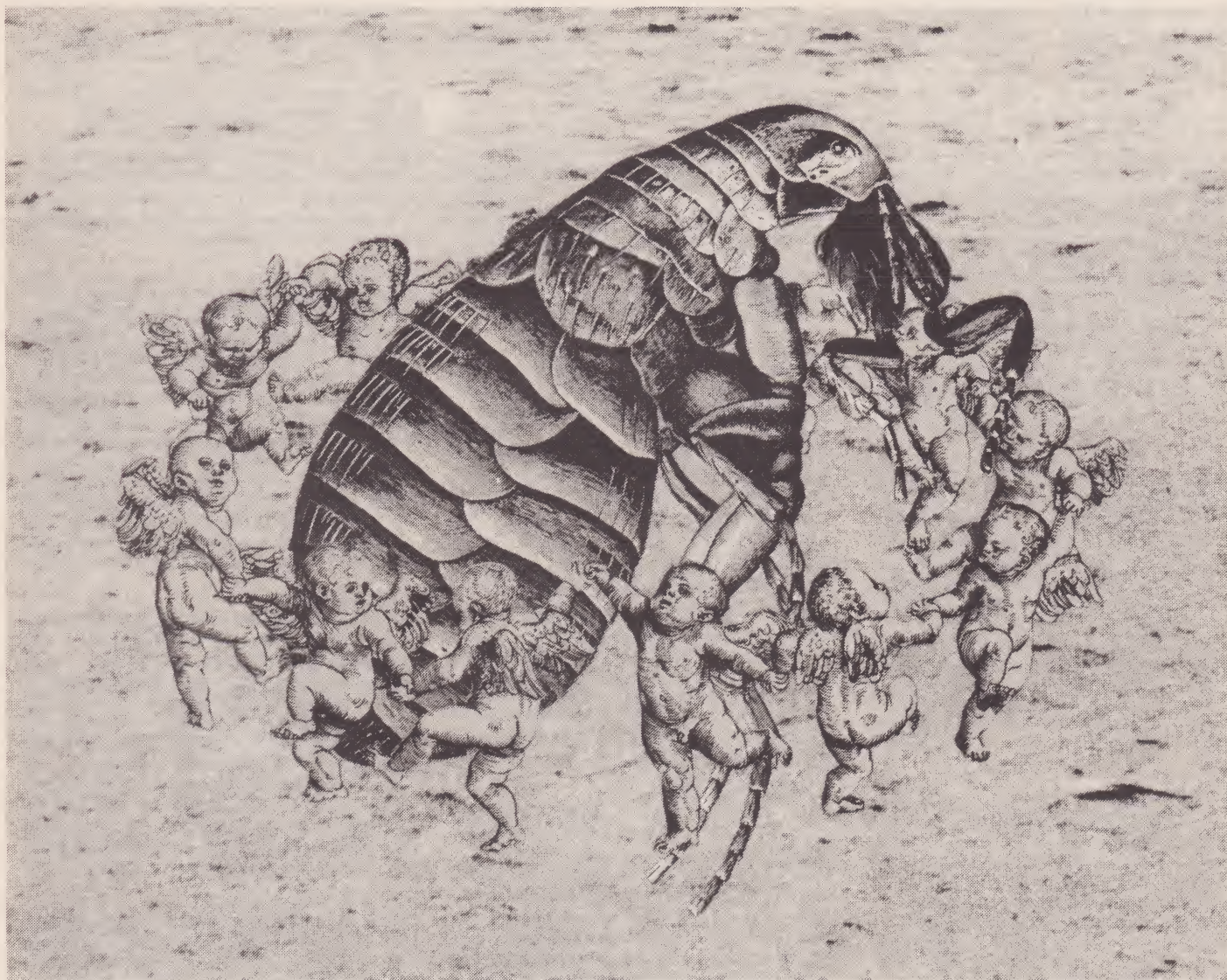
Vol.10, #2/Nov.'96 thru #4/Mar.'97 (POB 1167, Port Townsend, WA. 98368) is a meaty 72-page bimonthly "libertarian" magazine which attempts to make something of an intellectual case for its religious faith in "free market" economics and "private property." The January issue features a short-sighted analysis of Portland's "new urbanism" in practice, along with a couple interesting pieces by Joan Taylor on "Child Pornography and Free Speech" and by Sandy Shaw on her lawsuits against the FDA. Highlights of the March issue include Thomas Szasz on "Medics in the War on Drugs" (critical of the California & Arizona medical marijuana initiatives), Wendy McElroy's one-sided analysis of the influence of Foucault on feminism, and publisher R.W. Bradford's account of New Zealand's recent economic history. Every time I read this magazine I am amazed that so many people consider themselves partisans of such a narrowly conceived notion of "liberty." Always a thoughtful, but also all too often irritating, read. Subscriptions are \$19.50/year (6 issues).

LITTLE FREE PRESS

#113/Feb.'95 (714 SE 3rd St. SE, Little Falls, MN 56345) is one of the final issues of the 4-page newsletter by Earnest Mann advocating a "Priceless Economic System." In this issue he recounts his vacillations again on whether or not to buy a used sailboat to embark on a sea-going life, and also comments on war, environmental destruction, starvation, stealing, etc. Unfortunately this little publication no longer exists due to Mann's untimely death.

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Johann Humyn Being

LOVE AND RAGE

Vol.7, #5/Oct.-Nov.'96 (POB 853, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009) is the 24-page left anarchist newspaper of the Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation which includes members throughout North America and publishes a Spanish-language version from Mexico City. This issue shows a lot of improvement over the last one reviewed, featuring informative articles on this summer's Zapatista Encuentro in the Lacandon forest of southern Mexico, the struggle in Kurdistan, the Active Resistance Counter-Convention (to the Democratic Party's Chicago convention), the Not on the Guest List protests (at the Republican's San Diego convention), and updates on Cambodia (the Khmer Rouge split), Mexico (the recent EPR armed actions), and much more. Subscriptions are \$9.00/6 issues.

LOVING ALTERNATIVES

#31/Oct.'95 (POB 459, San Dimas, CA 91773) is an interesting 56-page sex magazine which calls itself "an upscale contact publication dedi-

cated to presenting a positive image of all alternative lifestyles, with a special focus on the swing community" (also including nudism, S&M, new age and communal living). This issue features several short pieces on various aspects of "the lifestyle," along with a longer piece in Q&A format arguing that HIV is not the "cause" of AIDS. There are also lots of contact listings and advertisements in each issue. Samples are \$5; subscriptions are \$12/3 issues.

LOVING MORE

Vol.2, #3/Fall '96 (POB 4322, San Rafael, CA 94913) is a steadily improving 42-page polyfidelity magazine for all those unhappy with the limitations of monogamy, whether it be lifetime or serial! This issue features a look at lesbian polyfidelity by Celeste West, Jack Johnston's advice on the possibility of multiple orgasms for men, and Alison Rowan on "How to be Not Monogamous." Also included are conference reports, reviews, personal ads and news briefs. Subscriptions are \$24/year (4 issues).

LUMPEN

Vol.5, #8-9/Dec.-Jan. & #10/Feb.'97 (2558 W. Armitage, Chicago, IL 60647) is a lively and irreverent 76-page alternative monthly magazine for the Chicago area. The February issue is a "Sex Issue" that, despite the airbrushed-away genitals of the cover models, can get pretty raunchy inside. Highlights include "Resistance on All Fours" (a hilarious "Boring Theoretical Party" S&M distraction for "The Man"), "The Yuppie's Guide to Getting Laid in Chicago," and Kathy Mosley's survey of instruments of self-torture in the service of body-image in "The Brutality of Beauty." Less predictable than most alternative magazines. Sample copies are \$3; subscriptions are \$10/4 issues.

THE MATCH! #90/Summer '95 & #91/Winter '96-97 (POB 3012, Tucson, AZ 85702) is an irregularly-published 92 to 116-page anarchist journal, lovingly self-printed by the always cantankerous editor/publisher Fred Woodworth. The articles in these issues continue to focus on the rampant abuses heaped upon innocent peo-

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ple by authoritarian institutions, especially by cops, courts and prisons. But issue #90 also features "The Computer: Dr. Frankenstein's Latest Monster or Biggest Ripoff in History or Both?" (reprinted in the last issue of *APR*), and "How Business and Institutions Attempt to Control the Small Press" (both by Woodworth). And in issue #91 the editor spins his own unlikely (but still possible) theory on the whereabouts of former American Atheists organizational head Madalyn Murray O'Hair who mysteriously disappeared over a year ago with two other members of her family (he thinks they're being groomed by *Hustler* publisher Larry Flynt as his successors). Both issues continues the very well-done serializations of Iris Lane's fiction "The Two Sisters," Kent Winslow's "Landmarks in the Desert," and Paul Roasberry's "Teaching Pigs to Whistle." Subscriptions are well worth the \$10/4 issues (cash preferred) if the often grouchy tone of this zine doesn't put you off.

MEDIACULTURE REVIEW

Vol.4,#2/Summer '95 (77 Federal St., San Francisco, CA 94107) is a 20-page newsletter of media analysis from a liberal perspective published by the Institute for Alternative Journalism (which also maintains an on-line computer wire service carrying articles "from the independent and alternative press"). Each issue includes news and commentary covering the latest developments involving media technologies and policies. This is an important, though usually only mildly critical, newsletter which deserves a wide readership. Subscriptions are \$18/year (6 issues).

MIGHT

#13/Nov.-Dec.'96 & #14/Jan.-Feb.'97 (77 Federal St., Second Floor, San Francisco, CA 94107) is a wannabe-hip, glossy 76-page magazine that mixes up quirky humor, and generic infotainment with a little bit of twenty-something attitude. Each issue includes lots (*lots*) of short pieces of useless or useful information, and articles to irritate, entertain or just catch your brief attention, all in a format guaranteed to imitate television on paper. Issue #13 includes David Wallace on "Impediments to Passion" (in which he argues that "HIV could well be the salvation of sexuality in the 1990s"), along with Gap, vodka and Rolling Rock ads. Issue #14 features Glasgow Phillips on the history & ironic cultural (in)significance of the T-shirt. Subscriptions are \$19.95/6 issues.

MOTHER JONES

Vol.21,#4/July-Aug.'96 (POB 469024, Escondido, CA 92046-9838) is a slick, professionally-produced, 80-page bimonthly magazine featuring left-liberal news and commentary, usually with an emphasis on investigative journalism that's hard to find anywhere else. Although this issue's cover story on the NRA and its defense of gun ownership of assault weapons is disappointing, other pieces make up for it, including L.J. Davis' look at ongoing "Republican Whitewaters" (S&L scandals involving leading conservatives), Alan Downs' "The Wages of Downsizing" (on the actual effects—lower wages, fewer benefits, rather than more efficient corporations—of the mass layoffs of the last decade), Judith Levine's very important exposé

of the new hysteria over children accused of sexual abuse, and Paulina Borsook's look at the unreality of Silicon Valley's newfound "libertarian" capitalist mentality in "Cyberselfish." Subscriptions are still just \$18/year.

MOUTH

Vol.5,#6/Mar.-April '95 thru Vol.7,#4/Nov.-Dec.'96 (61 Brighton St, Rochester, NY 14607) is an impressive, 48-page bimonthly "Voice of Disability Rights," ready to question a lot of traditional assumptions about "crips" in each issue. The Nov.-Dec.'96 issue theme is "Inside Crip Politics." This is a zine that everyone could benefit from & enjoy reading. Sample copies are \$3; subscriptions are \$16 to \$48/year.

MSRRT NEWSLETTER

Vol.9,#7-8/Sept.-Oct. & #9-10/Nov.-Dec.'96 (Chris Dodge/Jan DeSirey, 4645 Columbus Ave. S., Mpls, MN. 55407) is now a bimonthly 12-page "socially-responsible" librarians' newsletter with a more readable format. Each issue includes library news, alternative periodical reviews and a few capsule small press book reviews. Subscriptions are now \$15/year.

MUSELETTER #43/July '95 thru #62/Feb.'97

(Richard Heinberg, 1433 Olivet Rd., Santa Rosa, CA. 95401) is a very readable 4-page monthly comment zine. Each issue includes one essay or review. The July issue consists of an overview paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilization titled "A primitivist critique of civilization." The February issue addresses the need for "Economic Democracy." Subscriptions are \$15/year.

NAMBLA BULLETIN

Vol.17,#2/Sept. & #3/Dec.'96 (POB 174, Midtown Sta., New York, NY. 10018) is the 24 to 28-page newsletter of the North American Man/Boy Love Association, founded "to organize support for boys and men who have or desire consensual sexual and emotional relationships." Each issue includes relevant news reports, letters and fiction. The September issue came out urging a vote for Dole/Kemp in last year's presidential election. Subscriptions are now \$40/year.

NAMEBASE NEWSLINE

#9/April-June thru #14/July-Sept.'96 (Public Information Research, Box 680635, San Antonio, TX 78268) is a 12-page periodical distributed exclusively to users of NameBase (a micro-computer database with 182,000 citations and 83,000 names primarily tied to the intersecting agendas of intelligence, military, diplomatic and corporate circles—see the NameBase review in *APR* #2). Issue #10 covers "The 1960s and COINTELPRO: In defense of paranoia," including a good overview of the many government agencies involved, the tactics used, and the immense scope of the campaign against the antiwar movement and the radical left. Issue #13 paints Patrick Buchanan's failed presidential nomination campaign as an exercise in "Class Warfare," but only half-convincingly. And issue #14 gives a decent overview of the already massive, but still growing dominance of multinational corporations. Subscriptions are free to purchasers of NameBase (\$79).

NUKEWATCH PATHFINDER

unnumbered/Fall '96 (POB 649, Luck, WI 54853-0649) is a 4-page anti-nuclear weapons & anti-nuclear power tabloid, documenting and encouraging "nonviolent" resistance. This issue gives an update on the mixed verdicts on Laurentian Shield Plowshares activists who felled U.S. Navy ELF antenna poles used for communication with Trident submarines (acquitted on felony "sabotage" charges, but convicted on charges of "destruction of property"). Send an SASE for a sample.

ON THE ISSUES

Vol.5,#2/Spring '96 (POB 3000, Denville, NJ 07834-9838) is a slick 64-page liberal-feminist magazine subtitled "The Progressive Woman's Quarterly." The Spring issue features Sheila Jeffreys' cover story tirade against "sexologists, sexual liberals, and industry entrepreneurs" (not to mention pornography and prostitutes) under the title of "How Orgasm Politics has Hijacked the Women's Movement." Other Spring issue articles sing the praises of electing female politicians, celebrate '90s girl bands, and profile the youngest (and first female) speaker of the Italian parliament—who also happens to be a reactionary Catholic. Subscriptions are \$14.95/year.

OPEN FORUM

#7 thru #12/undated (Lianos, POB 8343, Athens (Omonia), GR-10010, Greece) is an unpaginated, small-format international sex/contacts zine, "for liberal-minded people who desire an open exchange of ideas and opinions." Each issue includes short articles like Elliot Cantsin's liberal call for "Sexual Freedom as a Civil Right" (specifically speaking of adults—he relegates the question of children's sexuality to an anarchist concern) in issue #7, and Chuck Dodson's straightforward defense of child pornography in issue #8. Sample copies are \$10; subscriptions are \$32/4 issues.

OUT YOUR BACKDOOR

#8/undated (4686 Meridian Rd., Williamston, MI. 48895) is an always enjoyable, homey magazine, now up to 64 fun-filled pages. This issue features editor Jeff Porter on "The Marginal Life," Kurt Sunderbrach on "Biking the Edge of Suburbia" (before it gets developed), David & Mindy Bolduc's simple story of winter "Cruising in a Tiny Boat" (a 15-footer in the Bahamas), Ross Signal on planting native trees, Jeff Porter again on "Me & My Superbike," amongst a lot more mostly focussing on boating & bicycling. If you haven't seen this zine yet you're missing something. Always a favorite read. Sample copies are \$3; subscriptions are \$8/4 issues.

PEACE MAGAZINE

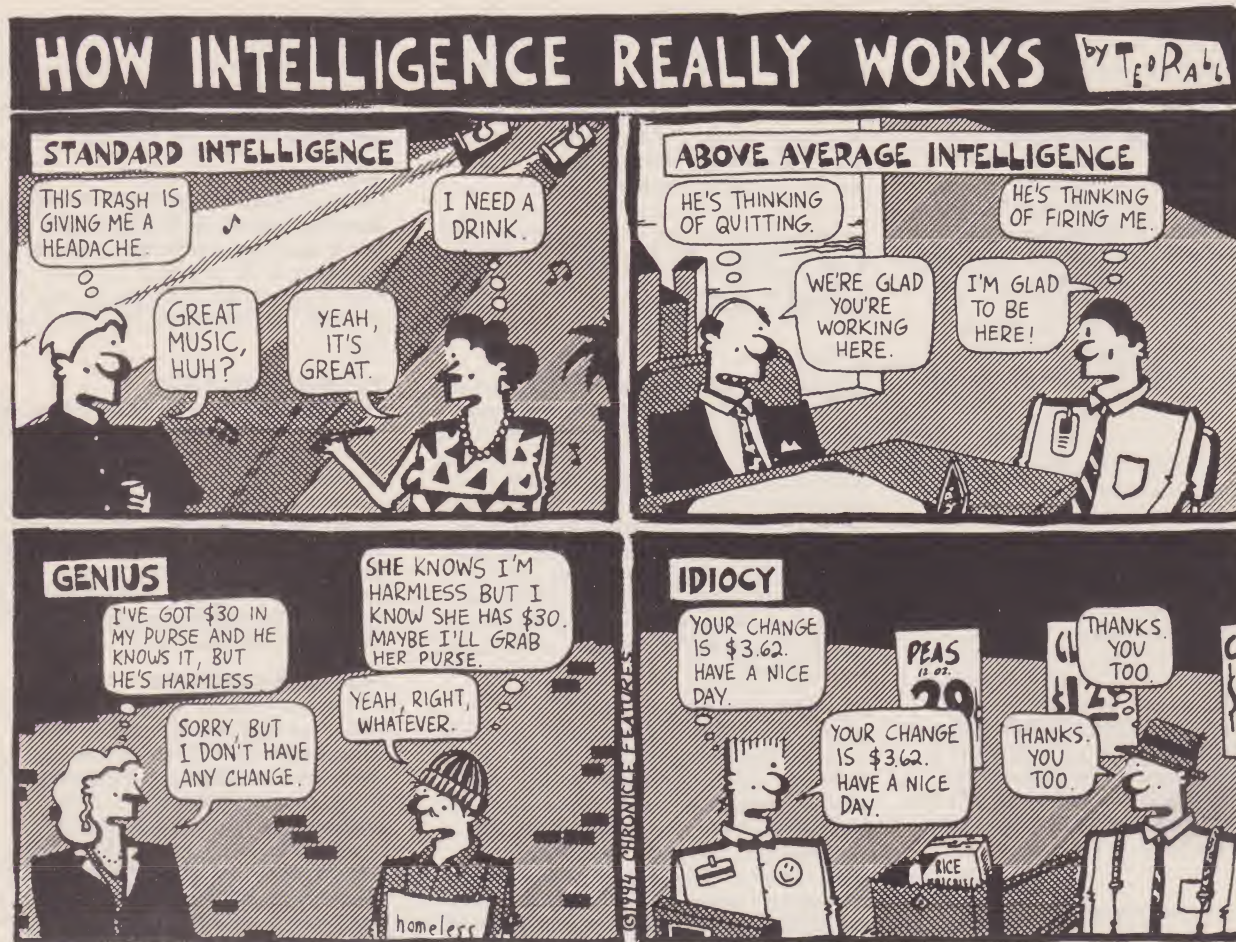
Vol.11,#1/Jan.-Feb.'95 thru Vol.13,#3/May-June '97 (736 Bathurst St., Toronto, Ontario M5S 2R4, Canada) is a 32-page bimonthly devoted to international analysis from a liberal/pacifist "civil society" perspective. In the May-June issue Mitja Zagar is interviewed on the question of "Why Did Yugoslavia Break Up?" Subscriptions are \$17.50/year.

PRISON LEGAL NEWS

Vol.5,#9/Sept.'94 thru Vol.7,#12/Dec.'96 (POB 1684, Lake Worth, FL 33460) is a very helpful 20-page monthly newsletter covering the state

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of U.S. prisons, especially focussing on the state of Washington. This zine should be of use to all prisoners, their family members, and anyone else with more than passing interest in the deteriorating state of U.S. prison by conditions. Subscriptions are now \$12/year.

PR WATCH

Vol.3,#3/Third Quarter '96 (3318 Gregory St., Madison, WI 53711) is a very important 12-page newsletter of "Public Interest Reporting on the Public Relations Industry," certainly one of the pillars of capitalist ideological strength. This issue features articles (from information provided by an inside "whistleblower") exposing phoney grass roots and "public interest" organizations financed and directed by giant corporations and their PR firms (most notably Phillip Morris and its PR lackeys State Affairs Company, Burston-Marsteller & APCO & Associates). This eye-opening publication should be checked out by every activist citizens' group in order to better understand the nature of the well-funded PR campaigns they invariably find themselves fighting. Subscriptions are \$60/year.

RAIN

Vol.14,#4/Summer'94 (POB 30097, Eugene, OR. 97403-1097) is a 60pp. decentralist/appropriate technology magazine, often featuring reports on exciting alternative social and technical projects from around the world. This issue includes articles on car co-ops in Berlin and

Oregon (a sensible idea whose time should have come along time ago), the UFA Fabrik alternative arts community which has thrived for over twenty years in Berlin, the sadly shortlived return of radical architect Christopher Alexander to the University of Oregon campus (whose design he coordinated 25 years earlier in a process emphasizing democratic participation in design by all users), and more. This is an exceptionally good issue of a usually very worthwhile magazine. Subscriptions are \$20/4 issues.

SECULAR HUMANIST BULLETIN

Vol.12,#4/Winter '96-'97 & Vol.13,#1/Spring '97 (Box 664, Buffalo, NY 14226-0664) is the 16-page newsletter of the Council for Secular Humanism (formerly CODESH, the Council for Democratic and Secular Humanism), with the expected critical coverage of religious issues and promotion of secular & humanist values. The Winter issue announces the death of Gordon Stein, one of the founders of *Free Inquiry* magazine, and editor of *The American Rationalist*, both of which have been reviewed in these pages. The Spring issue describes the attempt by the Vatican to undermine UNICEF programs. Subscriptions are included with membership in CSH for \$18/year.

SHITHAPPY

#4/undated (Adam Bregman, 11338 Joffre St., L.A., CA 90049) is another rollicking issue of this must-see 32-page zine. This time Adam

Bregman checks in with "A Brief Guide to L.A.," an account of his summer vacation in Israel & Europe, three steamy short stories, and more hilarious accounts of his costumed adventures in "Klowns! Klowns! Klowns! Klowns!" (see APR #3 for a sample of his clown madness). Send at least \$2 for a zine that may well brighten up your day!

SKEPTICAL INQUIRER

Vol.19,#4/July-Aug. thru #6/Nov.-Dec.'95 (Box 703, Buffalo, NY 14226-0703) is the always readable and often interesting 64-page bimonthly "Journal of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal," now in a new standard magazine format. Although its writers usually promote a dogmatic scientism in their approaches, they nevertheless occasionally provide genuine evidence to debunk many of the non-scientific targets that they investigate and analyze. The July-August issue includes an illogical call for the banning of Tryptophan (based on the well-known ill effects resulting from the impurities in one corporation's Tryptophan product) by Stephen Barrett, Anthony Pratkanis' amusing step-by-step account of "How to Sell a Pseudoscience" (basically, the same tricks used to sell a lot of useless or harmful mainstream "science" as well), and Lynn McCutcheon's examination of "Bach Flower Remedies." The Sept.-Oct. issue includes Henry Bauer's fairly decent review of *Beyond Psychology: Letters and Journals, 1934-*

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1939, by Wilhelm Reich. While the Nov.-Dec. issue features Etienne Rios' conference report from the New York Academy of Science's conclave on "The Flight From Science and Reason," revealing the absolute arrogance of conferees in their unjustified and unjustifiable assumptions that science is always essentially unproblematic and that Reason must necessarily be expressed in the form of an objective naturalism. This document should be read to expose once again most scientists' excessive philosophical naivete coupled with their lack of (self) critical insight into the role played by science in modern society. Despite its overt biases, this journal often includes worthwhile & critical information for our overly gullible society. Subscriptions are \$25/year.

TEMP SLAVE

#9/undated (POB 8284, Madison, WI 53708) is a sometimes thoughtful, sometimes mischievous, sometimes hilarious look at temp workers and the corporate slavers who employ them. In issue #9 publisher Keffo describes his experiences with his first job, going to college, his workaholic father's early death, and his recent temporary escape from work for six months in Ireland. Also included in this issue is a reprint of Tom Wheeler's excellent diatribe "Pissing on the Work Ethic," an interesting review of *Power and Greed: Inside the Teamsters Empire of Corruption*, and Keffo's hilarious rant about using the word "Fuck!" This zine is always worth a look, and this issue is probably the best ever! Send \$3 cash for a copy today, or \$8 for a 3-issue subscription before it's too late.

U-DIRECT

#9/Aug./Sept.'96 (Mary Kuntz Press, POB 76617, Chicago, IL 60647-6617) is a 32-page "underground press" magazine, published by the organizers of the annual Underground Press Conference held for the last three years in Chicago (check with them to see if there's going to be another one this year!). This issue features a bittersweet reminiscence of interracial love by David Hernandez titled "Joanie: A Story in Black & Blues," a self-confused piece titled "Cheap Shots: A Pacifist's Quest to Understand Violence" (in which the "pacifist" author all-too-typically sees nothing at all hypocritical in calling armed enforcers, cops, to throw a drunk out of his garden!), along with pages of reviews and poetry. Subscriptions are \$10/year (4 issues).

UNCOMMON DESIRES NEWSLETTER

#21/Dec.'94-Jan.'95 thru #25/Dec.'96 (Postbus 408, 1000AK, Amsterdam, Netherlands) is a very well-done, 20-page zine "examining how [desires for underage girls] are manifest in society through fantasy and behavior, and how such desires are treated in the media...as well as in art and literature," including news of the latest persecutions involving sexuality and children in each issue. Issue #21 includes more commentary on the ridiculously illogical finding in the Knox case (following the Supreme Court's refusal to review it) that videos of clothed children taken of public events in public places can be considered child pornography(!), and news that the "Netherlands Justice Committee recommends elimination of sexual choice for 12-16

year-olds" (signalling the potential elimination of one of the few halfway enlightened age-of-consent laws in the world). Issue #22 addresses the rash of new laws requiring "Sex-Offender Notification," and includes an editorial on "The Conspiracy against Child Sexuality and the Failure of the Left." Subscriptions are \$20/year cash or undesignated check.

First Time Listings

ACTION

Aug.'96 (Survival, 11-15 Emerald St., London W 1N 3QL, U.K.) is the small-format 4-page "Urgent Action Bulletin of Survival International." Each issue consists of an appeal to support indigenous communities under attack by the ever-expanding industrial, political and ideological threats of their civilized neighbors. This issue focusses on the use of "conservation" as an excuse to destroy the traditional ways of life of the Batak and Tagbanwa peoples of Palawan Island in the Philippines. The newsletter is included with membership in Survival International at \$30/year or £15/year.

AMSTERDAM CHRONICLE

#1/Jan. thru #3/Mar.'97 (Kanaalstraat 66-huis, 1054 XK Amsterdam, Netherlands) is a new 18 to 20-page, photocopied guide for non-mainstream travellers who want to know what's really happening these days in Amsterdam. The first issue is critical of the superficial *High Times* coverage of the Ninth Annual Cannabis Cup, giving a glimpse of the real drug scene in Amsterdam's legendary coffeeshops. The third issue waxes philosophical on the inevitable inequalities and exploitation of civilization & capitalism à la Rousseau & Noam Chomsky. Send \$3 for a sample copy; subscriptions are \$15/6 issues (checks to Grace Hogan).

ART? ALTERNATIVES

Vol.2, #7/July '95 (Outlaw Biker Enterprises, Inc., 5 Marine View Plaza #207, Hoboken, NJ 07030) is a slick, colorful 68-page magazine (from a marginally-mainstream company) covering just about every kind of art the serious magazines are too high-minded to touch. This issue includes the game board art of Kaylynn Campbell, the nightmare mazes of Bob Vessels, the sexually explicit, primitivist comics of Joey Seeman, and the bizarrely constructed shrines of Kim Stringfellow. This is about as good as it gets for a commercial magazine, with very few ads and some dynamite angles on art alternatives. Single copies are \$4.99 in the U.S. & \$5.99 in Canada; subscriptions are \$19.95.

AUTO-FREE TIMES

#10/Winter & #11/Spring '97 (POB 4347, Arcata, CA 95518) is the 40-page magazine of The Alliance for a Paving Moratorium. The Winter issue includes Roger Baker on "Eight Myths of Traffic Planning" and Richard Register's "Depaving the World." The Spring issue includes Mark Petersen's editorial "How to be Auto-Free," and Elisa Peter's critique of "New Highways for the Americas and Europe: The United Colors of 'Free Trade.'" If you haven't

already heard why all paving of new or expanded roads should be stopped immediately, get a copy of this right away! This is going to be a crucial issue for ecological radicals in the coming decade. Subscriptions are \$15 to \$45/year with membership in the Alliance.

BEDLAM

undated/undated (Michael Skelinton, 515 S. Granados, Solana Beach, CA 92075) is a dark, nearly incomprehensible experiment in self-expressive in the form of a small zine. It's more impressive visually than textually. Maybe you'll get more out of this than I do. Send a contribution.

THE BLEEDING EDGE

#1/undated (POB 1233, Springfield, IL 62705) is a brand new 36-page small-format "visual arts zine," featuring a nice full-color cover, a piece on Mbanna Kantako's Afrikan Liberation Radio (a pirate station serving a black neighborhood in Springfield and fighting repeating FCC attempts to shut it down), and an excellent interview with Stephen Dunifer, founder of the pirate station Free Radio Berkeley (which is also fighting FCC attempts to shut it down). Send a contribution for a sample.

CHARACTER BUILDER

#3/undated (Chris O'Hara, 1317 Grant Ave, #516, San Francisco, CA 94133) is an unpaginated, spiral notebook-style zine on colored paper that features a captivating collage of words, images, photographs, quotes, newspaper clippings, lyrics, slogans and artwork meticulously compiled by Chris O'Hara. Chris, who also penned *The Philosophy of Punk—More Than Noise!!*, which provided readers an in-depth look at the philosophical ideals that have emerged from the punk movement, utilizes some of the same passions in his zine. The zine has a broader focus and contains examples of people overcoming and tearing down barriers, provoking thought and challenging assumptions. Several topics are discussed such as the decidedly pro-sex stance in "The 10 Sexual Commandments," a short but informative piece on gays in San Francisco, plus an interesting twist on the sexual politics of meat. Other issues approached in these pages include racism, the media and advertising, and creativity in the workplace. Send \$4 for a copy. [TW]

COMMUNIST HEADACHE

Notes for Working and Living
#4/Spring & #5/Autumn '96 (c/o Black Star, POB 446, Sheffield S1 1NY, England) *are the latest issues of this intensely serious yet witty 28-page zine. In the Spring issue the publisher provides something of a self-analysis while expressing his dissatisfactions with the radical libertarian milieu in England, and his attempts to make some headway in criticizing predominant perspectives like the workerism of the anarcho-syndicalists and the "waiting for the crisis" mentality of libertarian communists. He faces some of the same problems North American radicals face, and asks some of the same questions we should be asking ourselves. This issue also includes a brilliant little sketch framed around "Agent Fox Mulder" and his "X-Files" that deserves a much wider exposure. Issue #5 includes an interesting analysis of

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Charles Bukowski's critique of work in his novels *Post Office* and *Factotum*, unfortunately in excruciatingly small type. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

THE CONNECTION

#216/Sept. 28, '96 (Erwin Strauss, 13107-B Autumn Woods Way, Fairfax, VA 22033) is a 68-page reader-written APA (formerly *The Libertarian Connection*) in which more or less 60 regular contributors ramble on in a never-ending conversation covering topics from religion and politics to science and economics, with a little pseudo-science and wishful thinking thrown in as well. Now that the type is full-size TC is much more readable than in previous years. And this issue includes comments from a relatively new contributor, Space Needle, who has made me reconsider trying to read through whole issues again after missing many. This type of free-ranging participatory interaction won't (and can't) be for everybody. But if you have some well-developed ideas you'd like to bounce off some outspoken critics, it may be the place for you. Sample copies are \$2.50; subscriptions are \$20/8 issues (checks to Erwin Strauss).

CONTAGION

#1/Fall 1995 (Hard Pressed Books, 1430 W. Foothill Blvd. #34, Upland, CA 91786) is a dense, 36-page zine that was originally intended to have been a punk zine but ended up as something completely different. In fact, the only discussion about punk is in the introductory message where the publisher discloses what a disappointment the punk movement has been. The rest of the zine consists mostly of articles and fiction which address other topics. One article "Inside the Funhouse" by Mike Stanitski, who works at a group home for emotionally disturbed youth, peels away some pre-conceived notions about these homes and provides a behind-the-scenes perspective that is both fresh and enlightening. There's also a book review of Cornel West's "Race Matters", and an opinion piece about ISBN registration. Send a \$1.50 for a sample copy. [TW]

CRANK

#4 & #5/undated (Jeff Koyen, POB 757, Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009) is an outrageously entertaining and increasingly notorious 48-page zine of undiluted mayhem and willfully arrant attitude. Created by the mischievous Jeff Koyen, both issues are filled with illustrious accounts of deliciously depraved behavior and wickedly funny material that so eagerly travels beyond convention. Certainly, one could make the argument that many zines travel this same road. However, rarely will anyone find anything filled with such dynamic and engaging prose, not to mention some truly beautiful misanthropic rants which should bring a chuckle to all you jaded souls. Koyen also has a meticulous eye for detail, avidly displayed in #5 in which he reprints a threatening letter from the reactionary producers of the Rush Limbaugh show and matter-of-factly points out the face of that self-absorbed fat fuck himself arrogantly drawn onto Mount Rushmore on the stationery. Issue #4 features an interview with Jim Goad shortly after they were charged with felony distribution of lewd material, more info

about Black & Decker and trepanation, while issue #5 also features such wonderful gems as "The Unholy (and unlikely) Redemption of Keanu Reeves", and a hilarious drinking game sure to please your boss, "Cranky Land." Jeff's an inventive sort too. Check out the highly-praised "Almost-Wordless Icon Review Section". The artwork and designs are sharp, the writing superb, the humor witty and derisive—quite simply, a zine of such quality is a treasure to be savored for every sneering, satirical, and snarling word within its pages. Such utter contempt for convention ought to be appreciated in today's increasingly stale and run-of-the-mill zine world. \$3 for a sample copy; \$12 for 4 issues. [TW]

CURIO

#1/May '96 (POB 522, Bronxville, NY 10708-0522) is definitely a *curiously* slick and colorful new 72-page quarterly magazine aiming to cut its own niche in the arts community of the New York area. Between full-page ads for Swatch watches, Grand Marnier and Absolut Vodka we're treated to an unusual mixture of alternative journalism featuring looks at the life of a Japanese student in New York trying to push through a minor voting reform back home in Japan, a mediocre 4-page poem by Elizabeth Wurtzel, multiple short selections from Mickey Z.'s favorite zines (the best excerpt is "Becoming Human" by Nicole Roberts from the zine *Mouth*), an interview with a "young" fashion stylist, a piece on Toys for Tots bikers, and an opinion column celebrating Food Not Bombs. Sample copies are \$6; subscriptions are \$12/4 issues.

DISHWASHER

#4/undated (POB 8213, Portland, OR 97207) is a wonderful 40-page zine filled with news, comments, drawings, history...in fact, everything you could probably ever want to know about being a dishwasher! Dishwasher Peter even has an extensive essay on "Dishwashers, Unions and New York City: A History." This is well worth the \$1 cost. Get one today!

THE EDGE

Vol.2, #1/undated (1 Nichols Court, Belle Vue, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0BS, UK) is a well-written, 32-page, British science-fiction zine. This issue features an interview with Christopher Fowler, regarded as one of Britain's best horror writers, a cyberpunk story from John Shirley, more cutting edge sci-fi from Keith Brooke and Paul Di Filippo and plenty of video and book reviews. Send \$5 for a sample copy. [TW]

FIERCE FEMME

#1/undated (1388 Haight St. Box #8, San Francisco, CA 94117) is a brand new 30-page zine for women bikers. This issue features Sprockette's account of bicycling at the Beijing Women's Conference, along with several interviews with bicycling musicians like Lala Hulse (banjo player for Cypher in the Snow) and Skunk Anansie. Send \$2 cash for a copy.

FLAMING FLAG

#2-#4/undated (POB 102, Columbia, MO 65205) is a 12 to 18-page photocopied anarchist zine published by & far high-school-aged kids.

The latest issue includes short pieces like "An Essay on Anarchism" by Ryan Peterson, the anonymous "Ideology of Atheism," and the second part of Diablot's "What is Anarchy?" Send a contribution for a sample copy.

FREEDOM WRITER

Vol.14, #1/Jan.-Feb.'97 (POB 589, Great Barrington, MA 01230) is a 16-page newsletter dedicated to exposing the activities of the religious right. This issue focusses on where all the money comes from with an article by Matthew Freeman & Rachel Egan on "Funding the Right." Subscriptions are \$25/year (included with membership in the Institute for First Amendment Studies).

FUCK ME

#2 & #3/undated (Beau, Marc & Missy, POB 892827, Oklahoma City, OK 73189-2827) is a raw, photocopied collection of short stories, poems and anecdotes many of which contain an ample use of "colorful" language. For example, let's consider the cover of issue #2. It provides us the titles of some of the main items featured inside this particular issue. They include, "I Wanna Fuck Yer Sister," "Fucking the hellman's mayonnaise again," and "Marc's Fucking Wonderful Coloring Page." I think you get the picture. I couldn't find a cover price for either of these issues, so for those of you who are "currently fucked" and require this particular type of reading material, I suggest you send a buck for a sample copy. [TW]

FUNNY TIMES

Vol.11, #11/Nov.'96 (POB 18530, Cleveland Hts., OH 44118) is a 28-page humor tabloid chock full of comics (by Ted Rall, Bill Griffith, Peter Kuper, plus many, many more) and humor essays (Andrei Codrescu on "Workaholicism," Dave Barry on the usual, Maro Kaufman on Swedish superstore IKEA, etc.). US subscriptions are \$21/year (\$31/year elsewhere).

FUTURE IMPERFECT

#2/Fall '95 & #3/Spring '96 (c/o Saestar, 258 Harvard St., Suite #159, Brookline, MA 02146; email: saestar@saestar.com) is a 40-page, quarterly, digest-sized magazine of commentary, fiction, and reviews with a self-proclaimed "critical" and "philosophical bent." "Our work is now directed much more toward all the wonderful and horrible aspects of technologized society," writes editor Charlie Wong, which is a fitting description of the overall focus of the zine. In issue #3 Mike Horne criticizes PBS for lack of balls in its own self defense, Mark Perneta celebrates the central role of the military in the growth of technologies, Daniel Kimmel presents a short end-of-the-millennium story, and Aleksander Williams warns that "We all, as cyborgs, need to code our world as well as consume it" in a stilted feature essay titled "Forelash: Resisting the Technology Myth." With a lot more critical depth this zine might generate some promise. Samples are \$4; subscriptions are \$10/year. [TW & JM]

GREEN ANARCHIST

#43-44/Autumn '96 & #45-46/Spring '97 (BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX, England) is a much-improved, 32 to 36-page eco-anarchist tabloid aiming "For the destruction of Civilization."

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The Autumn double issue focusses on an anti-technology theme, including Dan Hood's "Tech-No-How, You Gorra Have It," and reprints of the classic *Fifth Estate* manifesto "Civilization is Like a Jetliner" by T. Fulano and Mike Hale's critique of the intimate collaboration between scientific reductionism & social hierarchies in "Managers Must Measure." The Spring double issue focusses on an anti-ideology theme, featuring Feral Faun's criticism of the Unabomber's manifesto in "Fixed Ideas and Letter Bombs," an excerpt from Claudia's *Love Lies Bleeding* on "The Hypocrisy of Feminism," and John Zerzan's latest essay, "Running on Emptiness: The Failure of Symbolic Thought." Each issue also includes a "Diary of Ecodefense," a "Diary of Animal Liberation," and a "Diary of Community Resistance," as well as reviews, commentary and much more. This zine is well worth the subscription price of £5/5 issues.

HALF TRUTH

#21/undated (Jeff Hughart, POB 168, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254-0168) is a 40-page humor magazine which manages to eat up a lot of space with punk rock advertisements and lots of Cultural Jetlag comics. There is some humor too, although it is rather twisted. You can read about all the joy and fun to be had in tragedy and misfortune, pain and suffering in "Confessions of an Ambulance Man", how nuclear technology was developed by the Apache tribe in the 18th century, and you can see a photo layout of a dysfunctional family. A one-year subscription is \$10. [TW]

HELL BOUND SEXPOTS

#2/Autumn '95 (POB 11589, Detroit, MI 48211), formerly *Horny Bisexual Sluts*, is an unpaginated, photocopied zine for sexual libertines, unafraid to transgress the usual boundaries of gender and roles as it advocates an expansion of human relations beyond the wildest dreams of a society which worships hierarchy and commodity exchange. This issue features an interview with Carol Queen, sex worker & activist, as well as author of both *Women of the Light: The New Sacred Prostitute and Exhibitionism for the Shy*. Send a contribution for a copy if you dare.

HOBOS & HOMESTEADERS

unnumbered/Beltane '96 (Sunfrog, c/o SMS, 247 Sanctuary Lane, Liberty, TN 37095) is a mixture of theoretical reflections on nomadic living and personal accounts from a life "on the road searching for community & nomadic community on the road." Join Sunfrog and family on their travels from Detroit to the forest of Croatan in North Carolina to The Farm, San Francisco, Dreamtime Village, Wisconsin & Short Mountain, Tennessee, and find out what it's like to attempt join "the poverty jet-set." Well worth a look. Send a contribution for a copy.

IN MY SHOES

#1 & #3/Summer 1995 & Winter 1995-96 (Clark Communications, 410 East Park Street, Archer, FL 32618-4761) is a 40-page zine filled with gentle "personal stories from the journey of life." Each issue features several stories ranging from a Japanese-American woman writing about ethnic assimilation, a Cuban-American

writing about his return trip to Cuba and a mother writing about her experiences with her teenage daughter and how they dealt with the issue of sex. A 4-issue subscription is \$15. [TW]

IN THE FLESH

#1 thru #4/undated (5 Marine View Plaza, Suite 207, Hoboken, NJ 07030) is a slick & colorful, new 68-page magazine of branding, tattoos and piecing, which calls itself "the first mainstream body modification magazine" (and has the advertising and production values to prove it). The first issue includes short articles, interviews (including one with Devin Murfin on ritual hanging similar to the Native American ceremony) and a dictionary of "Piercing ABCs." Issue #4 features "The Magic of Steve Haworth: Bringing Body Modification into the 20th Century" (including info on under-the-skin implants, laser branding, etc.), along with plenty of provocative photos making this a magazine that will steal the interest of anyone, especially those who disapprove of non-mainstream body modification (you know the type: liposuction, pierced ears & face-lifts are OK, but scarification and nipple rings are "the devil's work"). A beautiful publication. Single copies are \$5.99.

LEVIATHAN

#1/undated (Mule Press & The Ministry of Whimsy, POB 4248, Tallahassee, FL 32315) is a 160-page, perfect bound paperback anthology of short fiction which is described as "ten journeys into the unknown" by the publisher. Some of the writers featured include Mark Rich, Tanyo Ravicz, Ursula Pflug, Joe Niggs, Nels Hanson, and Kathryn Kulpa, among others. The intent of the *Leviathan* anthology series is to "cover many different themes and concerns without the kind of specific restrictions that often prove the downfall of more focused theme anthologies." A sample copy is \$8.50. [TW]

LUNCH

Vol.1, No.2/Fall 1995 (112 S. McKemy #1, Tempe, AZ 85281) is an unpaginated zine of poetry (pages and pages of poetry), music, art, comix, fiction and essays. Aptly describing itself as a "totally not for profit, anti-work, pro-freedom, consumer liberating rag," *Lunch* delivers the goods with a frontal assault waged against the business of the news media and the spectacle of the sports industry. The column "Spotlight on Greed" details the nefarious Whittle Corporation's MTV-style news program commonly known as Channel One which is broadcast in classrooms across the country as well as the latest propaganda from Proctor and Gamble that completely ignores labor history and encourages company loyalty and docile, coopera-

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tive workers. The amount of poetry is a bit overwhelming, (admittedly, I don't care much for it) nonetheless, the observations about our business-run society from these malcontents are right on target. A sample copy is \$2.50; a 4-issue subscription is \$10.00. [TW]

MALEFACT

#3/undated (POB 464, Alexandria, VA 22313-0464) is a thoroughly amazing and revolting 64-page zine full of malevolent art and comics, all about as non-P.C. as it can get. Even if you disapprove of the content (and most people probably will, certainly not without reason), this zine will grab your ass and refuse to let go. Depictions include bondage, torture, mutilation, sexual abuse, fantastic creatures, and alien pornography. This issue also includes a less than lucid band interview with Antiseen and Billy Hill's "Chicharrone Review" rating 8 brands of spiced pork rinds. Copies are \$5 with an age statement required.

MASQUERADE EROTIC NEWSLETTER

Vol.3, #6/Nov.-Dec. '94 (801 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017) is a very nicely-produced, 32-page periodical that's well worth looking over, both for its provocative photography (by Richard Kern & Kric Kroll) and for its literate writing (Alice Joanou on "Ed Wood" & Red Arobateau's "Reflections of a Lesbian Trick"). For artistic and literary quality, this looks about as good as porn gets. Subscriptions are \$30/year.

MONKEY SPUIZZ

#3/undated (POB 461027, Los Angeles, CA 90046; email cghoul@ix.netcom.com) is a thoroughly amusing, if not necessarily very elevating, 24-page photocopied collection of death & gore comics, including (the anti-Christian) "Carnivore Boy," "Already Dead," and "Too Many Nachos Before Bed." Send a contribution for a laugh or two.

MOONBEAMS

#1/Summer '97 (POB 6921, Columbia, MO 65205-6921) is a brand new 32-page, quarterly pagan zine looking for "a better understanding of the mystical spirituality encompassing Earth-centered religions." Starhawk, Devic Gardening,

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pagan detective fiction and "A History of Pagan Literature" compiled by the editors are all included here. Sample copies are \$4.50; subscriptions are \$15/year.

MUTANT RENEGADE ZINE

#6/Nov.'95 (POB 3445, Dayton, OH 45401) is an unpaginated, punk-style newsprint zine that focuses on a particular topic for each issue. The topic for this issue is animal rights and we've got plenty of information here. There is an interview with Ingrid Newkirk, co-founder of the animal rights organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), information about animal research, the use of animals for entertainment, killing for sport, as well as lots of statistics about the links between eating meat and cancer, how it contributes to rainforest degradation, how it contributes to resource depletion (especially water), global warming and health problems. Send \$1. [TW]

THE NATIONALIST TIMES

#127/May '97 (POB 426, Allison Park, PA 15101) is a 28-page tabloid monthly published by the American Nationalist Union, a right-wing, apparently white-nationalist, group. The May issue includes a front-page anti-gay diatribe titled "'Coming Out' Episode of 'Ellen' is only the Tip of the Homosexual Iceberg," along with coverage of the recent Republic of Texas secessionist standoff, a critique of new attempts by politicians to revise the Consumer Price Index downward in order to reduce Social Security and Medicare payments, and a reprint of a Pat Buchanan column titled "Nationalist Sentiment Too Strong to Continue to be Ignored." This publication will be distasteful to all but die-hard racists. Subscriptions are \$25/year.

NEW INTERNATIONALIST

#264/Feb.'96 (1011 Bloor St. W., Ste. 300, Toronto, Ontario, M6H 1M1, Canada) is a professionally produced, 40-page magazine covering, in its own words, "The People, the Ideas, the Action in the Fight for World Development." This issue focusses on aging around the world, including Jeremiah Creedon's musings on the modern veneration of youth culture in "Vanishing Cream for the Mind." Subscriptions are \$38.50 in Canada & \$35.98 in the U.S. (from POB 1143, Lewiston, NY 14092).

NICE AND FUN MAGAZINE

#5/undated (NAFM, POB 40077, Waterloo Sq. P.O., 75 King St. S., Waterloo, Ontario, N2J 4V1 CANADA) is a 40-page, periodically produced zine of columns, reprints, poetry and fiction. One minute you are reading a short story of violence and eroticism, the next you are reading a critique of economic inequality and the specific reasons as to why it exists (it is highly profitable claims the author). It's a nice magazine, but not all of it is fun. Send \$2 for a sample. [TW]

PAPER

Oct.'95 (Paper Publishing Company, 529 Broadway, New York, NY 10012) is a slick, glossy mainstream rag loaded with a prodigious shitload of annoying advertisements for a horrendous assortment of hideous fashion apparel, tobacco and liquor products, elitist expresso bars, dull hollywood movies and corporate re-

cord labels. Out of the 170 or so pages, I counted nearly 100 pages worth of repulsive advertisements. They also devoted an additional two dozen pages to irritating and tiresome fashion layouts. The editors boldly proclaim that **Paper** is "America's fastest-growing monthly magazine of pop and alternative culture." The only thing boldly displayed in this wretched rag is a stunning level of superficial nonsense and shallow thinking. This magazine is easily one of the most useless and vile publications in existence, and a complete waste of paper. Subscriptions are \$20/year for the vacant minded. [TW]

PERCEPTIONS

#5/Summer '94 (11664 National Blvd. Suite 314, L.A., CA 90064) is a strangely brewed 66-page magazine mixing new age credulity with naive militia/patriot politics, including a few interestingly unusual articles amongst many others that too often cross over the line into fantasy or absurdity. This issue hits on topics like Ayurvedic medicine, criticism of HIV-AIDS orthodoxy, alien visitors from the Pleides, criticism of NAFTA, highly questionable "patriot" interpretations of law, and one woman's claim of an almost ubiquitous human infestation by worms. Sample copies are \$3.95; subscriptions are \$15/4 issues.

PINCH POINT

#9 & #10/undated (POB 128, North Lima, OH 44452) is an unpaginated, mischievous zine bristling with cutting humor and sarcastic wit. Readers will undoubtedly marvel at the high-brow lampooning (well...not all of it is high-brow), the mudslinging entertainment, the outlandish displays of indignation—and for good reason. **Pinch Point** is brimming with lavish displays of knee-slapping fun punctuated with liberal doses of hilarious anger, biting cynicism and intractable bitterness. Apply those feelings along with a healthy contempt for contemporary culture and you end up with hilarious little gems like "15 Reasons Why Pulp Fiction Sucks," "I'm Not Living in The Real World," a derisive recounting of the various personalities from MTV's incredibly lame TV show, and a great send-up of a regular staple of many a music fanzine entitled, "Tour Diary of an Alternative Band," all from issue #9. The buffoonery continues in issue #10 with the scurrilous "Close Encounters of the Nerd Kind," a series of imaginary encounters with David Letterman, as well as an informative guide for teenagers entitled "Help for Male Teenage Pathologies: Prostitutes and You," specifically prepared "to help the morally confused young man negotiate these rough waters" with sound scholarly advice. There's also "A-may-zing Facts About the Presidents" which provides rich nuggets of information such as Lyndon B. Johnson once claiming he could "kick God's ass," and the whimsical "Side Effect of Living: 25 Reasons to Drink." Well-crafted satire of this sort is a rare treat and a must for the discerning cynic. A bargain for a mere \$1 for a sample copy. [TW]

PLASMA BLUES

#2/undated (POB 49, Muncie, IN 47308) is a mostly hand-written, 16-page, digest-sized personal zine in which Jeremy Pickett rambles on about what has been going on around the Plas-

ma Center, a place where people, including Jeremy, regularly donate blood. Of course, no zine would be complete without including the obligatory review section and Jeremy complies by providing us with six pages of music reviews. Send a buck for a sample. [TW]

THE POOR, THE BAD AND THE ANGRY

#2/undated (Write to the following address only: POB 3305, Oakland, CA 94609) is a nicely-produced 36-page revolutionary communist magazine which attempts to put the best of Marx in largely comprehensible terms of the struggle for "proletarian power" through "class war," eschewing most of the mystifying pretensions of the Marxist sects and leftist academia. This issue focusses on its writers' attempts to encourage fare self-reduction and workers' self-activity (including criticisms of unions) within the San Francisco Bay Area transit system, a long but revealing analysis of "The Macedonian Question and the War in Former Yugoslavia in Historical Perspective" by Lacenaire, and some short & unconvincing "Notes Toward Transcending the Progress/ Anti-Progress Debate" (in which Marx's "schema of progress" is "taken as descriptive, not prescriptive"). This zine provides a glimpse of an important perspective given the severe lack of literate, genuinely anti-authoritarian communist publications around. Send \$3 cash for a copy.

RAGE

#4/undated (Wisdom Gun Press, POB 1289, Lake Worth, FL 33460-1289) is a 31-page black-and-white mag that has grown from a small, raw zine. Based in Palm Beach, **Rage** offers a decent mix of poetry, reviews, essays, interviews, and comics, but the artwork is what will catch your eye. Editor Danny Valencia pretty much dominates the proceedings, but I think there's something for everyone here. **Rage** is free in Palm Beach, but if you want a copy, I'd suggest you send a buck. [MZ]

RANT

#5/undated (Alfred Vitale, POB 6872, New York, NY 10128-0017). Relax, Al, you've finally got your review in **APR**. **Rant** is 76 pages, with perfect binding, in a digest format. Filled with angry and often well-written rants (of course), you get plenty of opinions from the editor along with the familiar names like Paul Weinman, Tuli Kupferberg, and Hakim Bey. I truly like this zine, and I like it even more now that he's lowered the price a bit. Send \$3.95. [MZ]

REAL DEAL!

#5/Dec.'96 (POB 19129, Los Angeles, CA 90019) is a 24-page comic full of graphic, mindless violence and street language. There's not much content worth commenting on (nothing positive, at any rate), while the drawing is obviously amateurish, but competent nonetheless. The cover blurb says "Humor for Adults!" But I'm not sure many people would find this "funny." Those who would will probably know who they are. Copies are \$2.

RIOT GRRRL REVIEW

#2/undated (POB 1791, Fort Myers, FL 33902) is a new 4-page photocopied review zine strictly for women's zines, and especially grrrl zines,

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listing over a hundred in this issue in tiny print. Send 65¢ in stamps for a sample copy.

THE SCAREDY-CAT STALKER

#2 & #3/Autumn '95 & Spring '96 (Krista Garcia, 5535 NE Glisan #5, Portland, OR 97213) is an unpaginated, digest-sized zine devoted to some Hollywood celebrity named Henry Thomas (he was in the movie E.T., Legends of the Fall, among others), and stalking/obsession stories. If you enjoy reading about establishment celebs, movies, gossip, etc., along with discussions of who is worth stalking (or not worth stalking) this zine is for you. I was consistently annoyed by the very small type—admittedly, a convenient excuse for ignoring most of this drivel. [TW]

SCIENCE GEEK

#2/undated (Steve Spatucci, POB 8641, Trenton, NJ 08650) is a wonderfully entertaining, full-sized, 64-page photocopied zine produced by Doug Larkin, a high-school science teacher who somehow manages to combine interesting discussions of scientific matters like quantum physics with punk rock (Doug also happens to be in the band, Cuppa Joe). Doug is ably assisted by Steve Spatucci who provided some terrific artwork, comics, and the article "The Pessimist's Guide to [Not] Meeting Women." Doug is quitting his job as a science teacher for a position with the Peace Corp in Kenya so Steve will become more involved in the task of assembling future issues of *Science Geek*. The scientific discussions are spirited and engaging (if only I had some teachers back in my high school days who had a passion for what they teach!), and the band interviews are not the standard boring fare one normally gets with most music zines. The bands interviewed for this issue are Spent, Poster Children and Small Factory and there is also a rather extensive music review section. Who would've thought you could mix punk with science and not have the results blow up in your face? I'm impressed. A sample copy is \$3. [TW]

SFEST, LTD.

Vol. VI, #2/Autumn '95 (POB 1238, Simpsonville, SC 29681) is a quarterly, 70-page "magazine of free expression" featuring a wide-ranging collection of material. The most abundant type of material is poetry and we are talking lots of it! This issue has over 30 pages devoted to poetry. The rest of the magazine consists of fiction, essays, humor, book reviews, letters, and an interview with English professor and poet Paul D. McGlynn. A sample is \$5.50, a 4-issue subscription \$20.00. [TW]

SKUNK'S LIFE

#1/Winter '96 (DB Pedlar, RD #3 Box 21A, Cambridge Springs, PA 16403) is a 20-page zine that describes itself as "an odoriferous muse of fiction, travel, health and religion." In my handy little dictionary the word odoriferous was defined as "yielding an odor" and "morally offensive." The zine title aside, this collection of writings did not "yield an odor" nor did I find anything "morally offensive." However, *Skunk's Life* does indeed contain articles on fiction, travel, health and religion. A four-issue subscription is \$10.00. [TW]

SLAN

The Big Bang of Consciousness Exploding on Paper

#4 & #5/undated (Robert E. Rogoff, POB 1304, Skokie, IL 60076-8304) looks sort of like a term paper—13 to 18 typewritten pages neatly stapled at the top. A zine ambitiously self-described as "slanted toward those seeking to join others in ethnological, psychiatric, psychological, educational, and sociological exploration," SLAN offers offbeat articles like "How to Cut Health Care Costs by Eliminating All Doctors" designed to contribute to the "evolution toward the superhuman." Who knew? Send \$2 for a sample. [MZ]

SMALL PRESS

The Magazine of Independent Publishing

Vol. 14, #5/Sept.-Oct. '96 is a slick, advertising-laden journal primarily intended for small press book publishers, but also of some interest to magazine publishers and serious zinesters as well. Heather Asiala's cover story in this issue on "Cashing in on Cowboys" is aimed at a narrow audience of western book publishers, but Anne Stanton's "No Distribution Without Retribution?" covering the current problematic situation with small press distributors will be of interest to all book and periodical publishers. Each issue also features 20 pages or so of fairly competent book reviews. Single copies are \$7.95; subscriptions are \$34/year.

SMELLY CAT

#2 thru #4/undated (Gillian, POB 2368, Scotia, NY 12302-0368) is a new 6-page loose-leaf zine whose claim to fame and uniqueness is that it is printed completely on peel-off Avery label paper, making it ideal for cutting up and sticking on the walls of your choice. Editor/publisher Gillian encourages you to join in her "Bathrooms Across America Campaign," since her ideal surface for posting is the inside of public bathroom stall doors! And she would like reports of the places *Smelly Cat* ends up being posted around the world. Send \$1 plus two 32¢ stamps for a sample copy.

SNUFF IT

#3/undated (The Church of Euthanasia, POB 261, Somerville, MA 02143) is the official publication from The Church of Euthanasia, a non-profit foundation devoted to restoring balance between humans and the remaining species on Earth. The church has but one commandment: Thou Shalt Not Procreate. Inspired both by a healthy dose of irreverence, a somewhat twisted sense of

humor, and seemingly genuine environmental concerns, *Snuff It* occupies the disconcerting gray area regarding the future of the planet—do we reach a new level of awareness or do we commit ecocide. Part of the fascination of this zine is in seeing how they explore these particular concerns in a strikingly unconventional fashion, at least as far as the traditional environmental movement is concerned. Officially recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service no less—further proof that the criteria for gaining tax exempt status is not very stringent—the church is busy promoting its message through a vast assortment of bumperstickers, buttons and t-shirts emblazoned with such slogans as "Save the Planet, Kill Yourself," "Vasectomy Prevents Abortion," "Teach Masturbation," and "Driving Drunk? Take Off Your Seatbelt." For Unabomber aficionados, *Snuff It* provides a compelling "Top Ten Reasons To Vote UNABOMBER" for your presidential write-in choice for the 1996 elections and they even created their own political action committee (UNAPACK) actively promoting the Unabomber for President. For additional information about the Church of Euthanasia or the Unabomber Presidential campaign on the web direct your browser to: <http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/coe/>. Highly recommended for those who are looking for something beyond the ordinary that is both humorous and unsettling. *Snuff It* is the Answer Me! of the environmental movement. Sample copy is \$2. [TW]

SOUNDINGS

Summer '96 (Twin Oaks Community, 138-S2 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093) is the 8-page newsletter of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities, "an association of five intentional communities which hold land, labor and other resources in common," consisting of short reports on activities at each community and a calendar of events. Subscriptions are included with a \$40 FEC membership, which also gets you a copy of the huge *Communities Directory* or an accompanying subscription to *Communities Magazine*. Well worth the price if you want to know about the wide range of intentional communities now operating in North America.

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SPAN CONNECTION

#1/May '96 (POB 1306, Buena Vista, CO 81211-1306) is the 16-page monthly newsletter of the new Small Publishers Association of North America, which is intended to supplant the recently bankrupt COSMEP, the International Association of Independent Publishers, both aimed primarily at providing information and contacts for small book publishers. The new organization is the child of well-known self-publishers (as well as former COSMEP board members) Tom and Marilyn Ross, whose *Complete Guide to Self-Publishing* remains one of the two best books ever published on the subject. Subscriptions are included with dues of \$75.

SPAWN OF SATAN

#5/undated (S.O.S., 1275 California #5, S.F., CA 94109) is a raw, photocopied zine dedicated to exposing the persecution homosexuals face. What a unique idea. It's not as if we don't already have hundreds of bad zines doing the same exact thing with no effect. However, I will recommend SOS simply because of all the stolen pictures they have reproduced herein. The photos are worth the effort. Send \$1. [MZ]

SPLEEN

#4 & #5/undated (POB 8122, Las Vegas, NV 89119) is a 24-page mini-zine billing itself as "The Angry Little Humor Zine," including regular features like "Pricks of the Month" and "Spleen's Picture Gallery." Subscriptions are \$5/5 issues.

STARGREEN

#6/Dec.'95 (Stargreen Productions, POB 380406, Cambridge, MA 02238) is a 34-page, digest-sized personal zine written entirely by Patrick Smith. Patrick devotes a large part of this issue reminiscing about his favorite band, Husker Du. However, I should point out that *Stargreen* is not a music zine. Patrick is an airline pilot and also includes stories about his travels to other parts of the world. In a previous issue, his story about a strip club in Budapest earned him the label of a "sex magazine" by *Factsheet 5* and Patrick continues to marvel at the fact he is "still getting mail from perverts everywhere." He also describes his recent visit to the most notorious concentration camp during WWII, Auschwitz. Send two first-class stamps for a sample. [TW]

STOOL

#3/undated (Stool Magazine, 625 East 4th St., Suite 261, Long Beach, CA 90802) is a pretty thick, occasionally outlandish, unpaginated, music zine filled with interviews and reviews, not to mention some out-of-the-ordinary articles. *Stool* is fairly dense—lots of small type with some text and graphics practically crashing into each other. A good chunk of this zine is dedicated to reviews and we're talking *several hundred* reviews here. Were talking live show reviews, reviews of vinyl, CDs, and tapes plus a smut flick reviews section that profiles porn star Mimi Miyagi. The politically correct may wish to avoid this publication. Samples are \$2. [TW]

TEN PAGE NEWS

Vol.3, #1/Fall '96 thru #5/Feb.'97 (POB 9651, Columbus, OH 43209) is a friendly little zine of 12 pages, rather than the 10 implied by its

name. These issues include a short rant against requiring calculators for math classes, some info on a public domain computer typesetting system named "T_EX," and a survey of "Mathematics at the Movies" by Owen Thomas, along with a few zine & book reviews. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

THORA-ZINE

#5/undated (POB 49390, Austin, TX 78765) is a thick, unpaginated music fanzine featuring a vast array of punk bands, postpunk bands, some metal, some retro '70s stuff, occasional (and annoying) *Raygun*-influenced layouts—though it is less dense than *Flipside*—and lots and lots of generic band interviews. In other words, it's your typical music zine. Some of the bands in this issue include EyeHateGod, Luscious Jackson, New Kingdom, Spore, and Joey Ramone, among others. This issue also has a free flexi inside featuring Anal Cunt, the Boredoms, Dixie Waste and EyeHateGod. Send \$3 for a sample. [TW]

THREE RIVER CONFLUENCE

#5/Autumn '96 (POB 63232, St. Louis, MO 63163) is an 8-page tabloid of environmental news for the Mississippi River Valley and Ozark bioregion, featuring Devin Scherübel on lead mining in the Ozarks and the Columbia Community Bicycle Program's free yellow bike plan, along with lots of other regional social/environmental news. Everyone in the Mississippi/Ozarks region should be reading this paper! Send a donation for a sample copy today.

THURN & TAXIS

#1/undated (Goelch Publications, Coleraines House, North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex, CM3 4BS, U.K.) is an excellent new 52-page "anthology of U.K. comics" published "for people who don't particularly like comics" in a glossy, journal format with a provocative title. My favorites from this issue include surreal pieces from "The Hippogryph Files" series, and editor Carrie Golus' disconcerting "You Are Leaving the American Sector." Recommended. The first issue is only \$6 postpaid.

THE ULTIMATE UNKNOWN

#1/Fall '95 & #2/Winter '96 (Combs Press, POB 219, Streamwood, IL 60107-0219) is a quarterly magazine of science fiction and horror. Each issue features an assortment of sci-fi/horror stories from a variety of writers. Unfortunately, my knowledge of the sci-fi/horror genre is so limited that I cannot render any kind of informed opinion. If this is your cup of tea it may be worth checking out. A sample copy is \$4. [TW]

VELVET GRASS

#12/undated (Grasshopper, 828 Brownwood Dr, NW, Roanoke, VA 24017) is a friendly, hand-written 30-page digest-sized collection of personal thoughts and reflections from a young woman who simply identifies herself as "Grasshopper." This issue seems particularly fixated on the subject of rape and its effects on Grasshopper and the Roanoke community. She also provides her thoughts regarding drug use (encouraging "personal responsibility"), race and culture in Amerikkka, a critical look at

jealously/possessiveness in male-female relationships, meat vs. vegetarianism, among others. Sample copies are \$2. [TW]

VIRAGO

#1/April '96 (Sarah Manvel, 1905 Sands Dr., Annapolis, MD 21401) is an honest & sincere 48-page zine attempting to create a space for intelligent women's dialogue. From the "Letter from the Editrix" to Copper's eulogy for Bewitched's Samantha, from Meredith Beeuwkes' "Belly Monologues" to Oeindrila Dubé's "How a 15 Year Old Girl Dresses for a Date," the short selections are all a pleasure to browse. Emotion is freely expressed without fanaticism. Vulnerability is acknowledged without accepting any role as victim. As its title announces, it is the zine of "a woman of strength or spirit." Send \$2 for a sample copy.

WINDFALL

Vol.16, #1/Spring thru #3/Fall '96 (East Wind Community, Tecumseh, MO 65760) is a 2 to 12-page tabloid newsheet purveying information about the workings, history and direction of southern Missouri's East Wind intentional community, currently made up of about 55 members living in a self-sufficient rural setting. The Spring issue includes an "ourstory" of the origins of East Wind's bylaws and a piece arguing that one of the community's greatest strengths is its internal conflict—primarily criticism aimed at "hierarchical personalities." Samples and subscriptions are free, but donations are gratefully accepted.

YAK'UZA

#8/undated (POB 26039, Wilmington, DE 19899-6039; email: yakuza@voicenet.com) is now a larger 76-page zine "inspired by punk rock and travel" with a color cover and very readable format. Mixing some decent fiction (by Nicole Panter & Jon Longhi), with a down-on-his-luck travel story by the publisher, an excerpt from Lee Ranaldo's "Moroccan Journal," and other miscellany, this is an interesting attempt at publishing a punk rock zine with room for much more than music coverage. Also included is a decent compilation CD for the package price of \$8.95 this time around.

YOUS

#62/undated (3019 Abell Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218) is a sporadically produced unpaginated zine of cheap art, music, reviews and rants, some of which is generously lifted from other publications. Reprints include Keith White's "Sweet Portable Lifestyle" from *The Baffler*, and Matthew Fuller's "Flyposter Frenzy" from the Spring/Summer 1995 issue of *Alternative Press Review*. There's some original material too including a critique of the nationwide trends in media. *YOUS* takes great delight in exposing the lameness of their local newspaper *The Baltimore Sun* and reviews its role in the context of national media trends of cutting back on investigative reporting, relying on the public relations industry and news services that provide the same information to all papers across the country, and the increasing number of information outlets in our society that are being tightly controlled by corporate interests. A sample copy is \$1. [TW]

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Alternative Press Books

Killing Time

Killing Time by Paul Feyerabend (University of Chicago Press, 11030 S. Langley Ave., Chicago, IL 60628, 1995) 192pp. \$22.95 hardcover.

Science is so important for modern society that it is necessarily many things for many different people. But one thing it will never be—nor should we ever aspire to make it so—is a fixed, monolithic method of investigating nature that must always lead to a single vision of Truth with a capital 'T'.

Until his recent death Paul Feyerabend had been in the forefront of the skeptical wing of contemporary philosophy of science for several decades, and scandalously so. Ever since the publication of a collection of his essays under the title *Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge* in the seventies, his ideas—and especially his criticisms of scientific rationalism—have been a center of explosive controversy in an otherwise often staid and formal discipline.

At the extreme he has been called "the worst enemy of science" in the journal *Nature* (1987). Yet he has never criticized science as such. Rather his criticisms are usually carefully aimed at dogmatic formulations of scientific investigation, at attempts to mystify scientific practice in order to keep it safe from popular influence and control, and at attempts to set arbitrary limits on what can count as genuine science—limits that prejudicially deny the potential of alternative traditions of knowledge and technique.

As should always be expected when powerful forces are opposed (in this case entire academic careers and, more importantly, the influence of corporations, governments and formal scientific institutions on scientific practice), the counterattack has been ferocious and prolonged. When Feyerabend's legion of critics weren't inventing bizarre interpretations of his words to knock down, they all too often made up for it by employing non sequiturs or ad hominem attacks in their attempts to discredit him.

Despite the fact that Feyerabend well documented the actual history of methodological opportunism in actual scientific practice, the reaction of *working* scientists to his ideas has been mixed at best. Stephen J. Gould has claimed that *Against Method* inspired his well-known formulation of the theory of punctuated equilibria. But many scientists detested his blatant challenges to formal method, along with the "dadaist" humor he employed so often. On the other hand, (non-rationalist) philosophers have often been more receptive to Feyerabend's

work, not the least because it has largely developed out of his encounters with well known thinkers like Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard (as well as Mill and Austin).

Killing Time is a very non-technical autobiographical account of Feyerabend's life, very nearly up to his death, which reveals more of the human meaning behind the otherwise masterful arguments in *Against Method*, *Farewell to Reason*, *Science in a Free Society* and his other books, all of which have proven so fruitful. But most importantly, it reveals the overriding centrality of love and abundance to his theoretical work. The greatest problem with positivism and rationalism is their relentless reduction of life to the inanimate, and of the richness of the natural world to the sterility of fixed concepts. Feyerabend made the change from dogmatic to adaptive theory and practice in his own life as well as in his texts. His has been a key voice in developing a view of scientific theories from the profoundly social perspective of their evolution within human communities conditioned by the human and institutional purposes they serve.

Killing Time, like all of Feyerabend's work, is a timely, momentous reminder that ultimately the fertile and incessant creativity of life will always escape every conceptual and linguistic prison. Some people will miss this point and go on fruitlessly fine-tuning their epistemological and methodological traps. Others will begin to open up their perspectives, heighten their senses, and begin experiencing more of their worlds.

-J. McQuinn

Diseasing of America

Diseasing of America by Stanton Peele (Lexington Books/The Free Press, New York, 1995) 321pp. \$14.95 paper.

The United States is the world capital of disease creation. In a profitable campaign to medicalize an entire array of human and social problems, the last few decades have seen the growth of a huge "recovery" industry aimed at reforming everyone from problem drinkers to wife-beaters, from illegal drug users to compulsive gamblers, from homicidal premenstrual women to junk food junkies. Where once each of these behaviors was considered the choice of people who remained responsible for their actions, the dogma of today insists that they all be treated as "diseases" against which their "victims" are relatively helpless to fight.

At first, the conception that problem drinking is really a disease called alcoholism

was successfully promulgated by boosters of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), the National Council on Alcoholism (NCA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) in battles largely fought and won through use of sensationalized stories of self-degradation and unjustified assumptions about the efficacy of 12-step programs. Following this victory, the same model of compulsive and often self-destructive behavior treated as a disease was utilized to describe an ever widening array of "addictions" afflicting a nation in which these problems are "out of control."

The fact that the programs typically prescribed to fight these new diseases often don't work very well if they do at all—and that most research consistently contradicts their extravagant claims—hasn't slowed down the rush to argue that 12-step programs and their ilk are the only way to "treat" problems which millions of people have traditionally taken care of on their own, or with the help of family and friends.

Stanton Peele is one of the major voices in the field of addiction studies arguing *against* the current "wisdom" which considers every form of addiction to be a disease. His book *Diseasing of America*, originally published in 1989, is now a classic statement opposing the medicalization of deviant behavior. And the new edition, including a preface briefly updating the current context of the battle still being waged, needs to be read by anyone concerned with the ongoing assaults on personal freedom, responsibility and community implicit in recovery industry ideology.

Peele argues that, contrary to the unproven claims of the recovery industry and its acolytes, it is essential to view addictions in the actual context of people's lives, to emphasize people's capacity to choose their

Zine Reviews

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ZINE WORLD

#1/undated & #2/Spring '97 (924 Valencia St. #203, San Francisco, CA 94110) is a big new 60-page zine review-zine in a small format. There are hundreds of reviews here, all of the genuine article, since *Zine World* only reviews "zines—small-scale amateur books and periodicals," including some double reviews, allowing readers to get the perspectives of two reviewers on a few of the same zines. Many of the reviews are critical, some are enthusiastic, some nasty, but the surprising thing for me is how many of these zines I've never seen. And the whole package is printed by Fred Woodworth (of *The Match!*) so the production quality is excellent! Check this one out right away. Samples are \$3 (\$3.50 Canada, \$5 elsewhere); subscriptions are \$20/7 issues.

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behavior, and to encourage them make non-addictive choices. It makes little sense to turn people into victims and excuse their poor choices for spurious genetic, medical or spiritual reasons as the recovery industry consistently advocates. And it makes especially little sense when even the model for 12-step programs, Alcoholics Anonymous, has never been shown to be "an effective treatment for general populations of alcoholics."

As Peele argues: "In the final analysis, what works in all...effective therapies is identical to what works for people who improve their lives without therapy: a strong desire to change; learning to accept and cope with negative feelings and experiences; development of enough life resources to facilitate change; a changed view of the attractiveness of the addiction brought on by a combination of maturity, feedback from others, and negative associations with the addiction in terms of the person's larger values."

Diseasing of America is undoubtedly one of the most important books of the last decade, both for its unrelenting exposure of the bizarre assertions, scientific fallacies and media sensationalism involved in the victory of the medicalization of addiction, as well as for its defense of the importance of community and personal responsibility in this area. However, while the range of Peele's concerns is wide as he describes and then demolishes the various facets of the recovery industry, it should be noted that he confines himself to a liberal social and political perspective, leaving room for a more radical and holistic critique to be made in the future. In the meantime, though, my advice is *read this book!*

-J. McQuinn

Philosophy of Punk

The Philosophy of Punk: More than Just Noise by Craig O'Hara (AK Press, POB 40682, San Francisco, CA 94140-0682/POB 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE, Scotland, 1995) 147pp \$8.00 paper.

I've waded through a lot of crap over the years from culture theorists (often Marxists) who do their utmost to make-over punk in their own image, ie: punk as "youth" phenomena, punk as a "Gramscian counter-hegemony," punk as "post-modern consumerism," punk as "late capitalist angst," etc. etc. Craig is an actual punk, so he gets it right—*anarchism* is the core orientation from which arises the coherence, structure, and persistence of punk in North America and Europe. *The Philosophy of Punk* presents a seamless mix of punk's history and the effective strategies informing its day-to-

day resistance to capitalism and authoritarian government. His discussion of "intra-movement communications" provides an excellent overview of the role zines such as *Profane Existence* and *Maximum Rock'n'Roll* play in the English-speaking movement. And there's lots on the punk bands (notably Crass) that have brought the anarchist message to thousands over the years. The book opens with an overview of punk's origins in England and America and the various media attempts to misrepresent it as detoothed subcultural fashion or aimless, directionless rebellion. This serves as a jumping-off point for an evaluation of the most retrogressive tendency associated with punk, namely the racist skinhead movement. Craig makes a convincing case that skinheads have nothing to do with punk inasmuch as their politics cleave toward patriotism, racism, and violence for violence's sake. He divides the rest of his book into an in-depth examination of the "key particulars of punk philosophy": anarchism, gender issues, environmentalism, and straight edge punk. For anyone who ever thought punk was just apolitical negativity Craig's review of punks against the Gulf war, animal rights punks, direct action feminist punks and the like will set them straight. I'd say about the only failing in this book is its neglect of the squats, info shops, and bookstores that provide anarchist punks with an international entre into their local communities, but that's a small failing compared to Craig's achievement in giving us a hands-on description of the true meaning of "punk." Interested in punk? You can't do without this book. -Allan Antliff

Punk & Body Art

Punk and Neo-tribal Body Art by Daniel Wojcik (University of Mississippi Press, Jackson, MS, 1995) 72pp \$15.95 paper.

Wojcik is a professor of English and Folklore at the University of Oregon. He has spent lots of time photographing punks between 1985 and 1994 but hasn't listened to what they say very carefully. Punk, we are told, reflects "societal disintegration and futurelessness," period. There are incredible gaffs such as Professor Wojcik's claim that the Sex Pistol's "God Save the Queen" refrain—"no future for you"—was directed at punks, not the British political establishment! It gets worse. The parodic B-52s band are labeled "punk"; empty generalizations about "post-baby boom apathy" are offered up to account for the punk movement; quotes from *Newsweek* abound; and not one zine is cited in the resulting spew of specu-

lative blather. In short, said professor doesn't have a clue what he's writing about and as far as I am concerned this book is definitely not tenure material. Sorry Dan, you're fired. -Allan Antliff

Henry Miller Odyssey

Henry Miller Odyssey, a film by Robert Snyder (Mystic Fire Video, POB 422, New York, NY 10012-9687, 1969) 92 minutes, \$29.95 VHS video.

Retrospective thoughts on an expatriate writer's struggles along with the pleasures of dialogue and reminiscence with long-time friends are preserved in the new video release of Robert Snyder's 1969 film biography of Henry Miller. Through readings, monologues and dialogue the author of the modern classics *Tropic of Cancer* and *Tropic of Capricorn* speaks his mind on a variety of subjects from the everyday banality of Parisian piss-oirs ("To relieve a full bladder is one of the world's great joys.") to his attraction for the occult ("I've always been interested in the occult, because I have never been able to accept this world. I know that there is another world behind it which is the real world."). It's interesting to see this aggressively angry writer—whose use of dirty language and pornographic imagery spread his infamous reputation well beyond even his wide circle of readers—relaxing with friends and sharing memories of his life while enjoying the attention of the camera. Friends in the film include diarist Anaïs Nin, author Alfred Perles, pianist Jakov Gimpel and novelist Lawrence Durrell. In the slice of his life captured here, Miller remains outspoken and unrecconciled to society. Speaking with Anaïs Nin about the paradoxical nature of neurosis, he counsels, "Either you destroy this world lock, stock and barrel, or you adjust to it in a way that you are detached from it." *Henry Miller Odyssey* is a pleasure for its simplicity and transparency. No colossus here, just an inquiring, often perceptive, man who is unafraid to remind us that "No matter what you touch and you wish to know about, you end up in the sea of mystery."

-J. McQuinn

Women Pay More

Women Pay More by Frances Whittlesey and Marcia Carroll (The New Press, 450 41st St., New York, NY 10036, 1995) 189pp. \$9.95 paper.

There are often distinct disadvantages to being identifiable as a minority or out-group member in an environment where those on the inside have the power and inclination to discriminate against you. Race, age, class,

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religion (or its absence), education, and language can all brand people as members of vulnerable groups in at least some situations, even when they might generally pass for "normal" in most others. But some people suffer from discrimination more than others, often without realizing it, in ways that can be hard to pin down.

Women Pay More (And How to Put a Stop to It) documents some of the economic forms of pricing discrimination faced primarily by North American women, along with suggestions on overcoming them. You may not be surprised to learn that car salesmen often quote higher prices for women, that plumbers and electricians often assume they can charge more because women won't know as much as men about their trades, or that identical clothing often is priced higher for women than for men in the same store. But you should also know that doctors often provide discriminatory care depending on gender, that lawyers sometimes charge different fees, and that besides earning only 77¢ for every dollar earned by men, women can also find it harder to establish credit, costlier to buy some forms of insurance and more likely to end up in poverty after retirement.

While almost all of the various rip-offs and scams like planned obsolescence, overpricing, monopolistic practices, bait-and-switch advertising, shoddy production, etc., etc. are endemic to capitalism, affecting just about everyone just about every day of their lives—regardless of gender, race or age, it can be worthwhile to know just how particular sub-groups of consumers are being screwed in differing ways. *Women Pay More* is a start at documenting this type of discrimination for women. -J. McQuinn

The Thought Gang

The Thought Gang by Tibor Fischer (The New Press, New York, NY & Polygon, 22 George Square, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1994) 310pp. \$18.95 hardcover.

What could make less sense than a bumbling, alcoholic philosophy professor down on his luck turned successful bank robber? Maybe an incompetent but tenacious, young, one-armed punk who teams up with him and develops a new-found, though irrational, level of respect for the efficacy of reason and logic in the commission of crime? And don't forget the pet rat, Thales.

The Thought Gang, Tibor Fischer's second novel, isn't just thoughtful, nor is it merely funny. It's a rollickingly hysterical mixture of sublime reflection and gritty, amoral street life. One thing is for sure, this

lumpen *Tractatus Logico-Criminalis* is never boring.

Fischer's prose, at times reminiscent of *The Confederacy of Dunces*, while at other times more suggestive of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, is just as ludicrous as these comic classics, but more intelligent by far.

For hours of wit and jest in the company of wood pulp and ink, you probably won't find anything better. -J. McQuinn

Signs of Life

Signs of Life: channel surfing through 90s culture edited by Jennifer Joseph and Lisa Taplin (Los Angeles: Manic d press, 1994) 239pp \$12.95 paper.

OK, lets agree to forget that awful title. Once again the arts council rears its ugly snout but this time with better results. Seems the manic d folks know a good story when they see one. We even get great cartoons and a few poems that touch places I wouldn't want to go. In other words, there's lots here to tweak your curiosity. About the only problem I had with this collection of stuff was the "truncated story line" theme—most every damn tale is three pages or less! The editors appear to play to the myth that Americans have the attention span of stunned squirrels (maybe they do, I'm Canadian after all). Anyway, these crusty yarns will keep you flipping the pages. Highly recommended. -Allan Antliff

The Complete Guide to Self-Publishing

The Complete Guide to Self-Publishing (3rd Edition) by Tom and Marilyn Ross (Writer's Digest Books, 1507 Dana Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45207, 1994) 406pp. \$18.99 paper.

Ever think about publishing your own book, or that of a friend? It may sound overly easy to eliminate the middleman, avoiding the inevitable compromises required when working with mainstream or even alternative publishers. After all, you only have to hire a printer and offer the books for sale, right? Not quite. In order to self-publish successfully (and there are scores of new successes every year) you need to take care of hundreds of details, avoid potentially costly traps and mistakes that are all too easy for novices to fall into, and most importantly, have some kind of realistic knowledge of how to get the books into the right people's hands once they're printed.

Right now, there are just two places to find out everything you need to know to

become a successful book self-publisher. One is Tom and Marilyn Ross' *The Complete Guide to Self-Publishing*; the other is Dan Poynter's *Self-Publishing Manual*. Nothing else available is quite in the same league, especially in terms of marketing your book, a crucial problem for most self-publishers.

The Ross's have once again updated and expanded their perennially popular *Guide*, including new information on the use of computers in publishing, electronic marketing and rights, sample letters and forms, as well as new publishing shortcuts, tips and case studies. This is all in addition to the tried and tested, step-by-step discussion of the entire publishing process that made the earlier editions of the book so powerful. (Zine and magazine publishers should be aware that a significant amount of the information presented in the *Guide* is applicable to publishing periodicals as well.)

If you're seriously interested in the self-publishing option there is no better place to find out exactly what's involved and what your realistic prospects for success might be than to get hold of a copy of this book. If you'd like to save money, you'll find that most good libraries will have a copy or two in their collections. But once you start reading the book you'll most likely realize that it's well worth having a copy of your own for consultation whenever the need arises.

-J. McQuinn

Beneath the Underground

Beneath the Underground by Bob Black (Feral House, POB 3466, Portland, OR 97208, 1994) 190pp. \$10.95 paper.

As most participants in the marginals milieu will know, Bob Black is its enfant terrible. He always seems to be getting himself into controversies, both theoretical and impractical, with an ever-increasing array of avowed enemies, usually of his own making. Thus it isn't too far fetched to find that by the time I've begun to write this review of *Beneath the Underground*, Black's latest published book, there are rumors going around that the publisher, Adam Parfrey of Feral House, has denounced Black and remaindered the book in order to wash his hands of him. However, even if this be true, it doesn't diminish the value of Black's written work.

Beneath the Underground is an uneven, but revealing and often amusing collection of critical essays and reviews giving the best picture yet available of the '80s zine scene and the overall marginals milieu. (On the

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side it's also unabashedly self-promotional, and a good way to get to know the author without taking chances by meeting him in the flesh!) The book's title essay covering the—as Black characterizes it—"sub-underground" milieu is a bit dated, but essential reading for those interested in the early roots of today's scene. (It was originally written for, but ultimately rejected by **The Nation**.) Ditto the review essay on the early **Factsheet Five** (under its original publisher Mike Gunderloy) and a piece on the subversive, sarcastic, though sometimes less than coherent tabloid, **Popular Reality**. Black then goes on to train his critical guns on anarchists, the SubGenius cult, sundry leftist leftovers, the Situationist International, a few of the better known '80s marginals, the Loompanics publishing & mail-order house, and assorted other odds and ends not worth categorizing here.

Fortunately, a couple of the more important essays come early on, including "The Anti-Anarchist Conspiracy" and "You Can't Blow Up a Social Relationship...But You Can Have Fun Trying!" These pieces take on particularly smug idiocies of the less imaginative wing of the contemporary anarchist movement and blows them to smithereens. A later essay on "The Realization and Suppression of the Situationist International" provides a good brief overview of the work of this seminal group of would-be revolutionaries in the form of a critical review of the attempted recuperation of their "art" through an exhibition at the Institute for Contemporary Arts. While the final review of Stuart Home's abysmal book *The Assault on Culture* gives Black a chance to set the record straight on the historical place of many of the more important radical cultural currents from the Surrealists to the present.

These few mentioned essays alone make this book well worth a close look. While the rest of the miscellaneous reviews and critical essays can be picked over, sampled, or devoured at the reader's leisure according to taste. -J. McQuinn

Peasant insurgents

Memories of a Makhnovist Partisan by Ossip Tsebry (The Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX, 1993) 19pp. No price given, pamphlet.

This is a short pamphlet put out by the Kate Sharpley Library, a group from England, that is currently publishing a number of hidden histories of the anarchist movement, including what looks to be an interesting piece on a trial of Japanese Anar-

chists for high treason.

The pamphlet, for all intents and purposes a documentary history, deals with the response of a single village in the Ukraine to Makhnovist incursions, 1918-1921. The village, Tartaki, located on a tributary of the river Bug was made up of 220 families in 1917, and an economy fueled primarily by agriculture. So as one might expect when the Revolution of 1917 hits the peasants expropriate the local seigniorial estates, and everything else not actually nailed down. Fully realizing that there was a danger of counter-revolutionary intervention, the villagers form battle detachments and also secrete an incredible amount of arms and munitions in nearby caves. They also begin launching nocturnal forays against recalcitrant landlords. By the time that Makhno begins his intervention, the villagers had organized their entire region into battle groups and were in the process of defending themselves against both the white Petlurists and Ukrainian Nationalist forces.

Things eventually devolve into fighting both the whites, the nationalists, the Austro-Hungarian German, the Bolsheviks and eventually trying to link up with Makhno's Insurrectionary Army. The villagers eventually do make contact with a Makhnovist division which is destroyed and the author makes his way via Poland, Austria and Yugoslavia to France.

The text is rather poorly translated, but this doesn't detract from the strength of the narrative. The interesting thing about the pamphlet is the spontaneity with which the villagers act in organizing themselves in a vacuum of power. Also it is intriguing to note the degree of autonomy the battle detachments assumed in taking on all comers. A worthwhile read for those interested in the finer historical points of the Makhnovist movement. -Paul Z. Simons

The Unsung Struggle

The Unsung Struggle: Resistance to Franco 1939-1951, The Assassination Attempt on Franco from the Air-1948 (The Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX, 1993) 31pp. No price given, pamphlet.

Yet another pamphlet from the Kate Sharpley Library, a group in London currently publishing "lost" anarchist histories. The pamphlet is authored by Antonio Tellez, a Spanish historian who has written, among other things a brief but excellent biography of Sabater, the anarchist terrorist par excellence, who was responsible for a whole series of infiltrations and actions in Francoist Spain.

The pamphlet tells the story of an attempt by a group of anarchists operating under the umbrella of the anarcho-syndicalist union in exile in France, the Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo (CNT), but without the knowledge or direct sanction of the organization. What they propose to do is buy a plane and drop bombs on Franco during his attendance at an annual regatta. The anarchists worked under a single assumption about security measures for Franco, that air cover would be non-existent.

The plane is purchased, bombs are built, and the mission is flown per plan. Upon arriving at the bay where the assassination is to be attempted, however, the attack plane is shadowed by a seaplane and eventually four fighter aircraft show up. The attempt is aborted and the hapless would-be assassins fly back to France. End of story.

In the course of telling the tale, however, Tellez also presents a little about the life of Laureano Cerrada Santos. One of those individuals undaunted by anything. Cerrada was involved in not only this attempt on Franco's life, but two others, one while Franco was visiting Hitler. He ran a forgery ring that included cranking out false identity papers for Jews during the Occupation, Spanish pesetas in a vain attempt to crash the economy, and rations cards, some of which were used by the Resistance in their operations. Cerrada was gunned down in a Paris street in 1977 under what can only be described as mysterious circumstances.

An interesting pamphlet, but without the authority of a documentary history and the teeth of any substantial critique. It is one for the shelves of those interested in that bleak time and place known as Francoist Spain. A curiosity, and not much else.

-Paul Z. Simons

Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism

Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm by Murray Bookchin (AK Press, POB 40682, San Francisco, CA 94140-0682/POB 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE, Scotland, 1995) 86pp. \$7.95/£5.95 paper.

Murray Bookchin, one of the best known of contemporary North American anarchists, has spent much of his life staking out his own personal eco-anarchist ideological territory under the banner of "Social Ecology" (or sometimes "Libertarian Municipalism"). He is the author of many interesting works from the fifties through the present, including his classic collection of essays from the sixties titled *Post-Scarcity*

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Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Holocaust Revisionism but Were Afraid to Ask. Named "Editor's Choice" by **Factsheet Five**. Special 146-page issue of **SALON: A Journal of Aesthetics**. \$5 from Pat Hartman, 305 W. Magnolia - Ste.386, Fort Collins, CO 80521.

Anarchism, his excellent volume on the history of the Spanish anarchist movement, and his failed attempt at constructing a philosophical magnum opus in *The Ecology of Freedom*.

At the same time Bookchin has never been content with merely constructing one more radical ideology in competition with all the others. His dream has always been to lead a coherent left-wing ecological anarchist grouping into a serious contest with the powers that be. However, his attempts at constructing such a grouping (from the *Anarchos* journal group in the New York of the sixties to the recent Left Green Network within the Greens milieu) have never met with much sustained success.

In *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism* Bookchin aims to pin the blame for his lifetime of frustration (despite his decades

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Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed is a 68-page magazine critical of all ideologies, including anarchism. Sample copy: \$6. (for 1st class add \$1) now available once again from C.A.L. Press, POB 1446, Columbia, MO 65205-1446. Full Sets of back issues still in print (#8 thru #42) are available as well at \$55 for the set.

Anarchy against Leftism, Bob Black's new critique of Murray Bookchin's anarcho-leftist *Social Ecology*, is the latest book published by C.A.L. Press, available for \$10 postpaid c/o AAA, POB 11331, Eugene, OR 97440. (Make checks to C.A.L. Press.)

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of valiant effort!) on an evil anti-socialist conspiracy which has subverted his dreams at every turn: the dreaded spectre of "Lifestyle Anarchism." For Bookchin, lifestyle anarchism is a contemporary manifestation of the individualist anarchist currents which have always bedeviled the world anarchist movement proper. The fact that the anarchist "movement" itself has always been more of a polymorphous insurrectionary milieu encompassing everything from anarcho-syndicalists, anarcho-communists and anarcho-futurists to anarchist feminists, anarchist primitivists and anarcho-situationists doesn't really matter to him. The important thing is that he has finally been able to name the anti-organizational cabal which opposes him and to explain the esoteric links between its often seemingly unrelated or even mutually contradictory

efforts!

Unless you are already familiar with the eco-anarchist milieu and know the backgrounds of some of the major players fingered by Bookchin (including *The Fifth Estate* group, *Anarchy* magazine, John Zerzan, Hakim Bey, and even this—according to Bookchin, "feral anarchist"—magazine!), *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism* will likely be impenetrable. If you do know the score, however, reading this unrelenting polemic may betray a few intriguing insights, will certainly reveal the paranoid side of Bookchin's perspective, and might possibly yield the most unintentionally hilarious political reading in recent memory. Can any book that grimly denounces *Alternative Press Review* for its choice of cover art be all bad?! -J. McQuinn

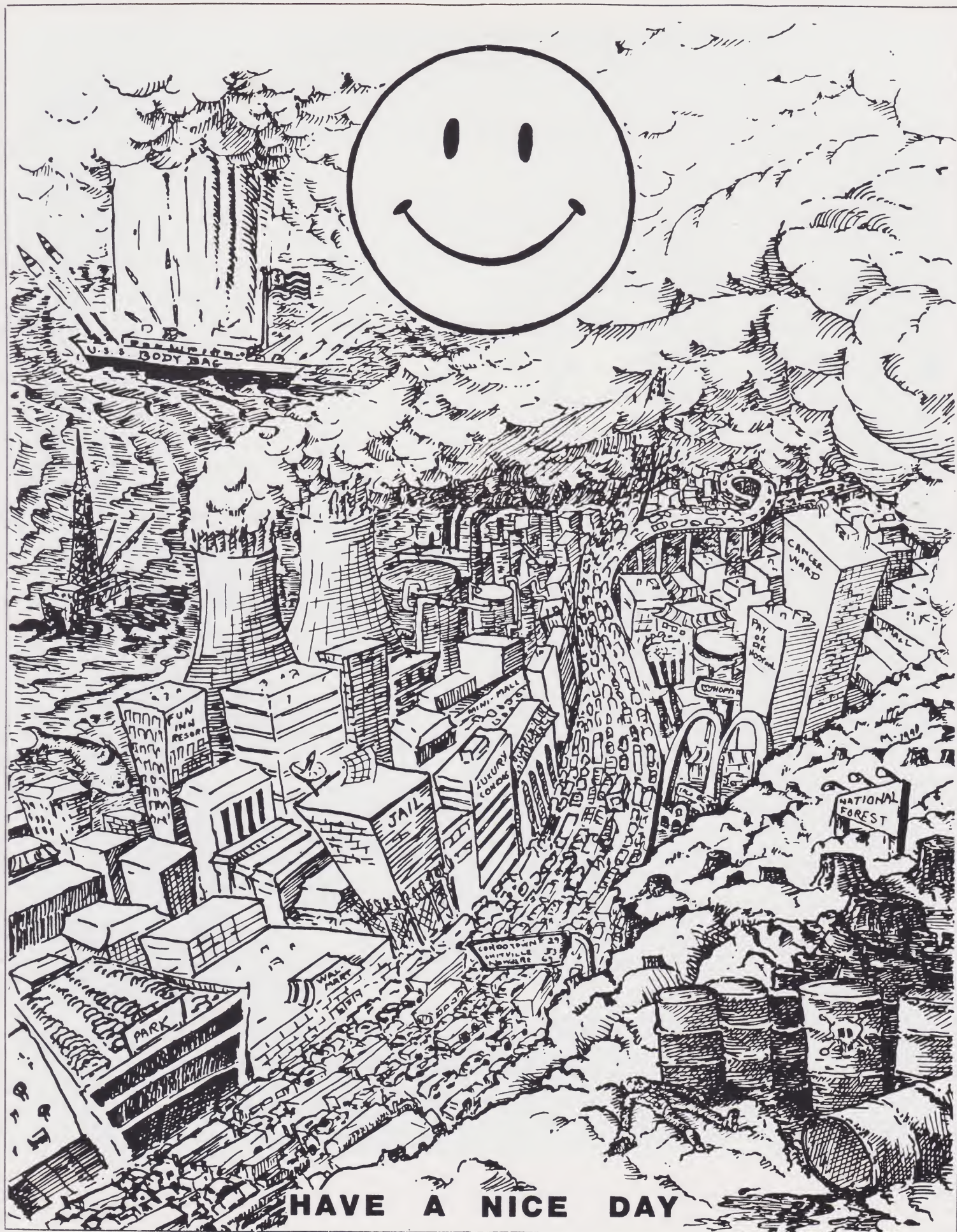
Getting Even

Don't Get Mad—Get Even by Jane Inder and Hilary Eyre (Paladin Press, POB 1307, Boulder, CO 80306, 1994) 246pp. \$22.95 hardcover.

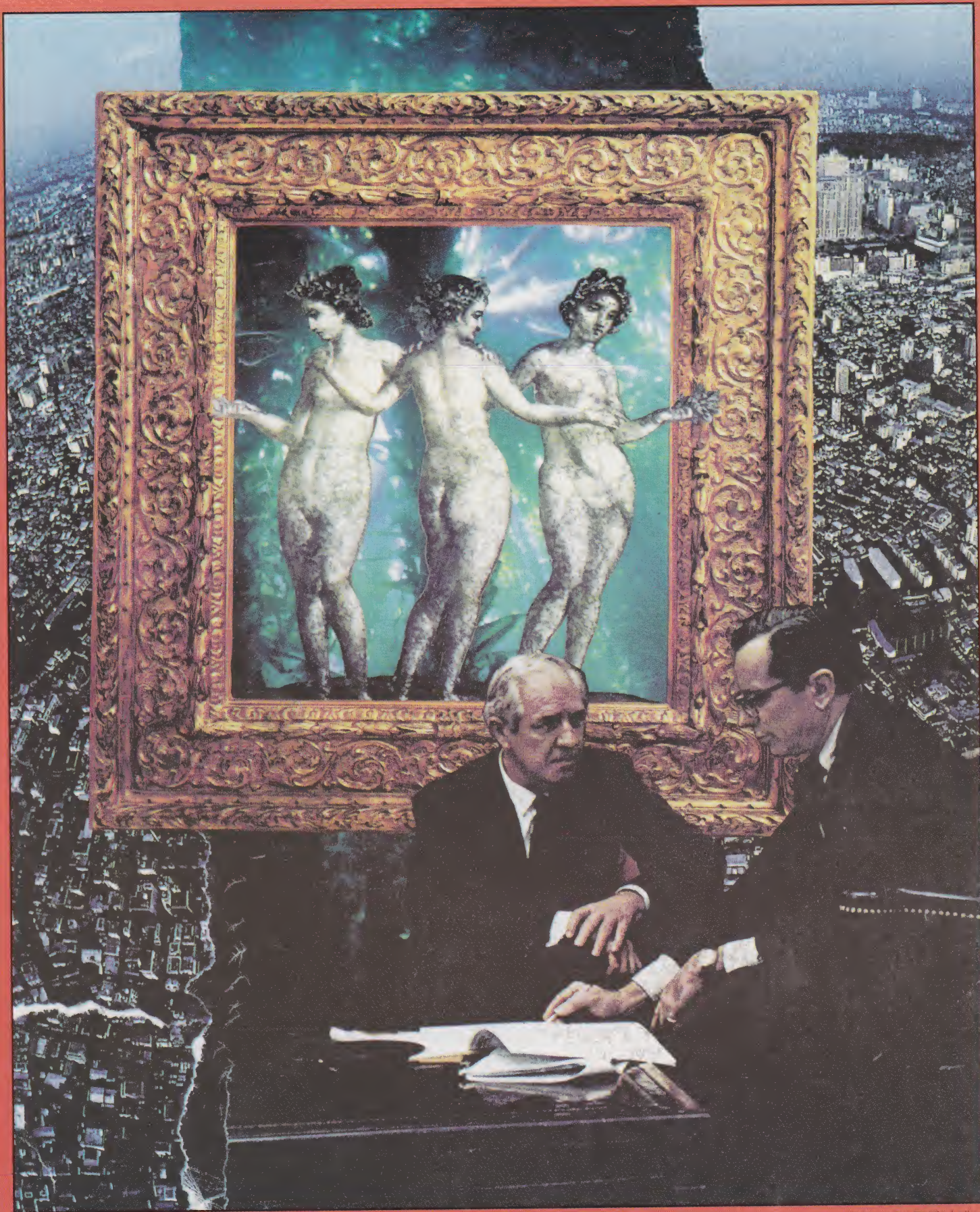
Ever wanted to get back at your ex-boss for firing you? Or to settle the score with someone who coldly ripped you off after you put your trust in them? Haven't we all?

Usually, it's not hard to think up some way to return ill favors, although most people would seem to find it not worth the time and effort required, given the general absence of retribution in our society by the great masses of wage-slaving, TV-narcotized wimps who appear willing to put up with seemingly infinite helpings of most forms of humiliation and degradation.

Don't Get Mad—Get Even is a book of suggestions—for people too lazy or unimaginative to think up their own—on how to provide extra misfortune for those who mess with you when they shouldn't. Unfortunately, though, the authors of *Don't Get Mad* focus almost entirely on getting even with particular individuals, when what is more needed is a book on fighting back against all the institutions and authorities that cause most of our *real* misery. This results in a book that tends to wallow in juvenile fantasies, when what could be really useful is a manual suggesting strategies and tactics for more effectively hitting back at multinational corporations, cops of all sorts, and federal, state and local governments. But juvenile fantasies may at least be a start. If everyone were to take their lives just a little bit more seriously, and draw a tighter line regarding just how much shit they'd take, we just might end up living in a much more interesting world. -J. McQuinn



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